Bengaluru Sunday, March 29, 2026 Pages 26 Vol 79 No 87 ₹8

DH on Sunday

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DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

RCB begin IPL-19 with a 6-wicket win

Devdutt, Kohli, Duffy star for defending champs at home

P12

Travel *Page16*

Ligurian charm

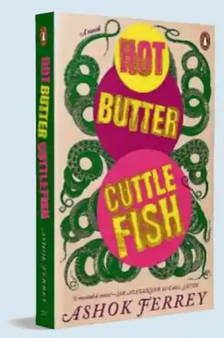
Head to Cinque Terre, a set of fishing villages along the coast of northwest Italy, for a bit of sun, sea and colour

Art & Pursuits *Page18*

Waste as witness

An exhibition on industrial debris is serving as an enquiry into the relationship between land and consumption

Books *Page15*



Love and other wonders

This delicious novel packs in a lot, and despite its slow pace, sparkles because of its wicked humour

Quickly

Houthis claim first missile launch on Israel

Houthi rebels claimed a missile launch toward Israel early Saturday, their first since the war in West Asia started. The Israeli military said it intercepted the projectile. Houthi Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree said they launched a barrage of ballistic missiles toward "sensitive military sites".
Details on Page 3

US may not be there for Nato if needed: Trump

President Donald Trump reiterated his disappointment with Nato allies over their refusal to send forces to the Strait of Hormuz and said Washington may not help them in future. "Why would we be there for them if they're not there for us? They weren't there for us."
Details on Page 10

Andhra seeks capital status for Amaravati

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a resolution on Saturday urging the Union government to grant legal recognition to Amaravati as the state capital by amending the AP Reorganisation Act. The resolution was moved by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu following an extensive debate.
Details on Page 8

Panel moots highway safety patrol force

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture has recommended that the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways set up a dedicated Highway Safety Patrol Force, on the lines of the Railway Protection Force (RPF), to bring better traffic discipline among motorists, reduce road accidents, and protect highway assets across the country.
Details on Page 7

Centre pushes PNG connections

The Central government on Saturday pushed for a rapid expansion of Piped Natural Gas (PNG) networks across urban areas in the country. A group of Union ministers held a roundtable meeting with state representatives and industry stakeholders, and outlined key priorities – including a single-window clearance system.
Details on Page 8

West Asia crisis: India's economic stress test

As the US–Israel–Iran war continues, sustained high crude oil prices could strain multiple sectors, slow growth and pressure fiscal health over the medium to long term

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

INSIGHT

Nearly 80% of LNG and 90% of LPG imports to India pass through the waterway between Iran and Oman, leading to disruption in supply chains in recent days. In pic, women wait for LPG cylinders in a queue outside a gas agency in Ranchi on March 25. PTI

In the last few weeks, long, serpentine queues have been reported at petrol pumps across several parts of the country, including Karnataka, Telangana, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir. People have been rushing to fill their vehicle tanks amid uncertainty. There have also been reports of fuel hoarding, with petrol and diesel being stored in buckets, water tankers, and even household containers such as pressure cookers, milk cans and jars. At the same time, delays in LPG bookings have caused concern among households, while a shortage of commercial cylinders has forced several hotels to shut operations, exacerbating the disruption.

While the authorities say that "panic buying" of LPG, petrol and diesel has been due to certain rumours, key concerns arise from India's heavy dependence on the Strait of Hormuz for the supply of energy resources. Though India has not been buying any oil from Iran since 2019 due to US sanctions, roughly 40% of crude oil, 80% of liquefied natural gas (LNG), and 90% of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) imports to India pass through the waterway between Iran and Oman.

India is the third-largest importer of crude oil globally, with 5.5 to 6 million barrels imported per day. Roughly 85% of India's crude oil requirements are met through imports. Between April and November 2025, 32.4% of total imports came from Russia, 17.6% from Iraq, 13.6% from Saudi Arabia, 11.1% from the UAE, and 8.1% from the United States, according to petroleum ministry data.

Retail prices of oil and gas have risen over the past month in most countries. Prices have increased by 30% in North American countries, including the US and Canada; around 30%-50% in Southeast Asian countries; 20% in Europe and 50% in African countries, Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said in a post on X.

In India, the prices of cooking gas, industrial diesel and premium petrol have gone up, while normal diesel and petrol have remained largely unchanged, despite the crude oil price in international markets rising by around 75%.

According to Puri, oil marketing companies are incurring a loss of Rs 24 per litre on petrol and Rs 30 per litre on diesel. Data shared by the petroleum ministry indicates that these companies are losing around Rs 2,400 crore per day.

To ease the burden on oil marketing companies, the Union government has reduced the special additional excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 10 per litre. The special additional excise duty on diesel has been removed, while on petrol it has been cut to Rs 3 per litre. As a result, the overall excise duty on petrol has fallen from Rs 21.9 per litre to Rs 11.9 per litre, and on diesel from Rs 17.8 per litre to Rs 7.8 per litre.

The tax cut is expected to result in a revenue loss of Rs 7,000 crore for the Centre over 15 days. Analysts estimate that the annual revenue loss for 2026-27 could range between Rs 1 lakh crore and Rs 2 lakh crore due to the duty cut on petrol and diesel.

▸ The crude oil crisis, Page 3A

Today's issue includes DH Classifieds Supplement

Freedom to choose gender or law to control?

The Transgender Persons Amendment Bill 2026 raises concerns about exclusion, curtails the right to gender identity, and may roll back hard-won protections

ARVIND NARRAIN

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026, was passed in the Lok Sabha on March 24, 2026, and in the Rajya Sabha the following day. In pic, members of the LGBTQ+ community march in solidarity in Bengaluru. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

The SUNDAY STORY

The Union Government, using its sheer majority in parliament, has passed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026, in the face of vociferous opposition from the primary stakeholder, the transgender community. The BJP-led government's disregard for institutional processes, as well as its failure to consult the affected community, was evident in the fact that the apex body representing transgender persons, namely the National Council for Transgender Persons (NCTP), was neither consulted nor informed of the proposed amendments.

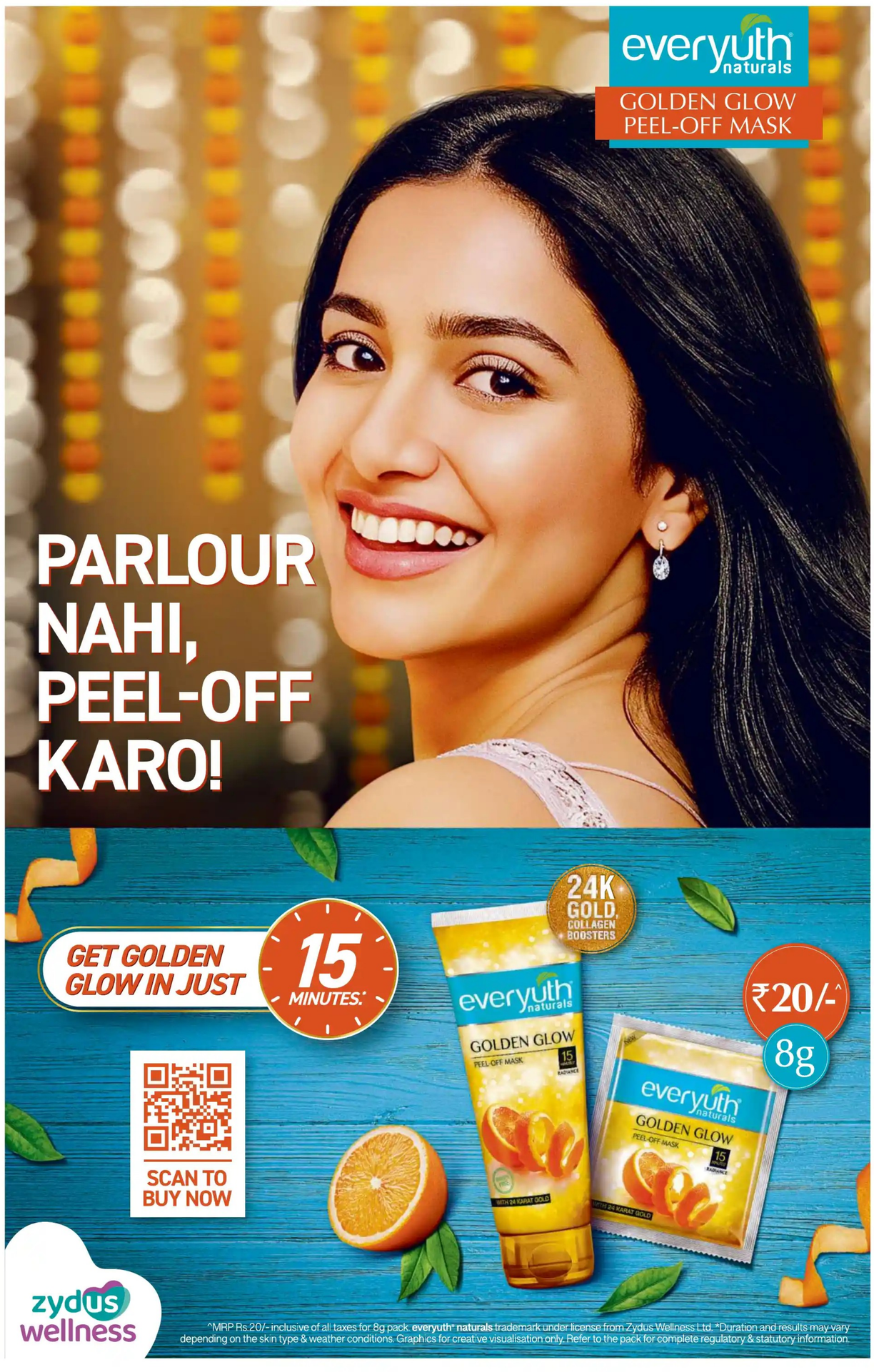
The trajectory on transgender rights in India, with its ups and downs, is one we could all have been proud of. The historic judgment of the Supreme Court in *National Legal Services Authority v Union of India* triggered a seismic change, as for the first time the rights of transgender persons to autonomy, dignity and the expression of gender identity were constitutionally recognised. Following this judgment, Thiruchi N Siva introduced a Private Member's Bill which was passed in the Rajya Sabha in 2015. Subsequently, the BJP government introduced its own bill which became the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. The Act itself only partly actualised the rights which the judgment had recognised. Nonetheless, it was an important step forward.

The imperfections of the 2019 legislation were also recognised by the Supreme Court in its judgment in *Jane Kaushik v Union of India* (2025). In this judgment, the court laid down the principle of omissive discrimination, holding that the 2019 Act, in its very design, perpetuated discrimination against the transgender community through statutory omissions. To remedy these gaps, it constituted a committee chaired by Justice Asha Menon, comprising eminent lawyers conversant with transgender rights as well as representatives of the transgender community.

The 2026 Bill is not based on any consultation with the two key institutional bodies engaged with transgender rights — the NCTP and the Supreme Court committee. Nor was the Bill the outcome of any meaningful community consultation. This democratic deficit in the formulation of the Bill has raised concerns about its impact on transgender rights. The Bill excludes some trans communities from its ambit and criminalises the very process of community formation. At its core, the law seeks to narrowly and strictly define who qualifies as a transgender person.

As per the amendment, the transgender community has three sub categories — the traditional communities like hijra, kinnar, aravani and jogta; those born with intersex variation and those who through 'force, allurement, inducement, deceit or undue influence' are 'compelled' to 'outwardly present a transgender identity by 'mutilation, emasculation, castration or amputation'. The proviso specifically excludes 'persons with different sexual orientations' and 'self perceived sexual identities'.

▸ Transgender rights, Page 3A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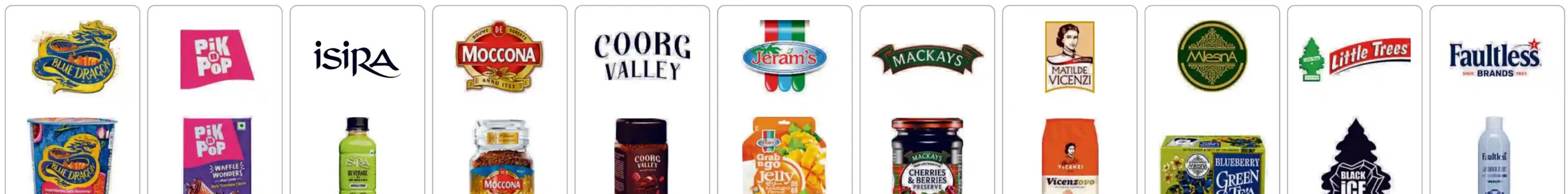

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West Asia in flames

How it impacts India

US-Israel strikes on Iran disrupt oil markets, threaten India's trade, remittances and energy security

Hormuz, the critical chokepoint

The Strait of Hormuz carries about 20% of global crude oil and LNG every day

Around 40% of crude oil, 80% of LNG and 90% of LPG imports of India pass through the Strait of Hormuz

US-Israel war on Iran: Key timeline

- **Feb 28, 2026** US and Israel launch coordinated strikes on Iran's nuclear sites, missile infrastructure and command centres. Supreme Leader Khamenei and senior IRGC officials were reported killed.
- **Mar 1, 2026:** Iran retaliates with missile and drone barrages on Israel and US bases across the Gulf. The Strait of Hormuz shipping was disrupted. Iran strikes Gulf energy sites including Kuwait's Mina al-Ahmadi refinery.
- **Mar 4, 2026** The Strait of Hormuz effectively closed. Nearly 2,000 vessels and 20,000 seafarers stranded. QatarEnergy declares force majeure on all LNG exports. Brent crude surges past $100/bbl.
- **Mar 13, 2026** The IEA head calls it the "greatest global energy security challenge in history – worse than the 1970s crises combined." India's rupee crosses 92/USD. RBI deploys $12–$15bn from forex reserves.
- **Mar 22, 2026** Trump threatens to "obliterate" Iran's power plants if Hormuz is not reopened within 48 hours. Iran threatens to mine the entire Gulf. Brent surges to $117–120/bbl – a 60% spike from pre-war levels.
- **Mar 25–26, 2026** Trump postpones power plant strikes for 5 days, hints at "winding down" but rules out ceasefire. Iran denies any talks. Saudi energy sites including Abqaiq and Ras Tanura face drone barrages. Conflict enters Day 27.

India's Middle East exposure

- The Middle East accounts for about **17% of India's total goods exports,** on par with the EU and the US, amounting to approximately **$75 billion in FY25**
- **Exports are well diversified,** with agricultural products, petroleum products, gems and jewellery, and transport equipment each contributing roughly **12%**
- India sources about **40%** of its crude oil and **38%** of its remittances from the region, equivalent to **$45 billion out of a total $119 billion in FY24**
- India's direct exposure to Iran is low; the real risk is a broad freeze on trade and travel across the region
- Total imports from the Middle East were **$159 billion in FY25 (22% of India's total),** dominated by **crude & petroleum (62%)** and **gold & silver (11%)**

The economic dashboard

- 94.56 **INR/USD** record low **(3.6% YTD depreciation)**
- $117-120 **Brent crude,** per barrel **(60% since Feb 27)**
- Nearly 10% **Sensex/Nifty** decline since conflict began **(Rs 40 lakh crore market cap erased)**
- Rs 60 **LPG cylinder** price hike **(91% of India's LPG from Gulf)**
- **India's forex reserves** down to $698.34 bn in week ended March 20 from $728.49 bn in week ended Feb 27
- 2.2 + lakh **Indian nationals returned** from GCC & Iran **(Remittances at risk)**

Countrywise India's exports to West Asian countries

FY25 total exports to West Asian countries: **US$75bn**

High energy prices to push inflation

The crude oil crisis, from P1

However, opposition leaders allege that the government is buying time, warning that petrol and diesel prices are likely to rise sharply after the assembly elections in five states and union territories conclude by the end of April.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, said the hike in industrial diesel would hit Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises the hardest and drive up inflation. He also expressed concern that the rupee could weaken to Rs 100 against the dollar.

The Modi government adopted a similar strategy during the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war, when assembly elections were underway in five states. Petrol and diesel prices were increased in May 2022, after the elections concluded.

Wider impact

However, the impact of the West Asia crisis is not limited to petrol, diesel and cooking gas prices. It is expected to have a wider impact. Sectors ranging from fertilisers and pharmaceuticals to key manufacturing industries such as steel, cement and power are heavily dependent on raw materials imported from Gulf nations.

It is likely to affect key macroeconomic indicators such as GDP, inflation, and the fiscal and current account deficits. High energy prices are likely to drive up inflation and increase government spending on subsidies, particularly for fertilisers and LPG. Lower tax revenues due to the excise duty cut, combined with higher subsidy outgo, may lead to reduction in the government's capital expenditure, potentially impacting the country's growth and development in the medium to long term.

GDP growth

In the Economic Survey tabled in Parliament in January, the government projected India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the 2026-27 financial year in the range of 6.8 to 7.2%. For the fiscal year ending March 31, the GDP growth is estimated to be 7.6% in real terms, based on the 2022-23 base year, according to the National Statistics Office.

In its latest policy review, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) projected FY26 GDP growth at 7.4%, with 6.9% growth for the April-June 2026 quarter and 7% for the July-September quarter. The RBI's projections were released prior to the government's release of the new base series at the end of February.

These projections were based on crude oil prices of around $70 per barrel. The recent spike in crude oil prices is likely to weigh on economic activities.

According to an analysis by SBI Research, high oil prices are likely to reduce India's economic growth by 20–25 basis points in 2026–27. If crude oil prices average $90 per barrel in FY27, India's GDP growth is estimated to slow to 6.8%. Each $10 per barrel increase in crude is expected to reduce GDP growth by around 20 basis points, and an average price of $120 per barrel could bring GDP growth down to 6.2%.

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), India's economic growth is projected to slip to 6.1% in 2026–27.

Goldman Sachs has cut its forecast for India's GDP growth in the 2026 calendar year to 5.9%, down from an earlier estimate of 7% made before the West Asia conflict.

Inflation

Energy costs influence the prices of a wide range of goods and services. High oil prices are expected to drive up transportation and logistics costs, impacting the prices of nearly all consumer items. Oil prices are also closely linked to electricity generation and manufacturing, as petroleum products serve as critical inputs in the production of plastics, chemicals, fertilisers, pharmaceuticals and synthetic materials. Consequently, the prices of these products are likely to rise alongside increasing oil and gas prices.

"There is a surge in prices of not just oil and gas but a lot of other commodities like plastics, chemicals etc due to supply being cut off from West Asia," said Prashant Vashisht, Vice President at ICRA.

"Additionally, the oil marketing companies would be making high marketing losses on auto fuels and if the situation persists, there may be a relook at pump prices," he said, adding that the increase in petrol and diesel prices would push the prices of other commodities higher.

"Higher commodity and fuel prices could slow the demand for several products, adversely affecting economic growth," he added.

After more than a year of decline, inflation has started firming up. Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based retail inflation rose to a 10-month high of 3.21% in February, while wholesale inflation reached an 11-month high of 2.13%, according to the latest official data.

Low food and fuel prices have been the key factors for favourable inflation numbers in recent months, but the situation is likely to reverse in the coming months. Fuel prices have already been partially increased and if the crisis continues, further hike is imminent.

According to Ernst & Young, if the West Asia crisis persists throughout FY27, it would erode India's GDP growth by around 1 percentage point to 6% and push the CPI inflation to 5.5%.

"The Indian economy is particularly vulnerable to such external shocks, with the adverse effects likely to cascade across multiple sectors through strong forward and backward linkages with crude oil and energy," EY noted in its monthly 'Economy watch' report.

Rupee hits new low

The Indian rupee has been hitting new lows almost every passing day. It slipped to a record low of 94.56 against a dollar on Friday. Since the onset of the West Asia conflict on February 28, the Indian currency has weakened by nearly 3.5% against the US dollar.

Analysts warn that the rupee is likely to weaken further and may hit the critical 100 threshold if the West Asia conflict escalates further.

"The concern of higher crude oil price for a prolonged period is weighing heavily on the currency and overall macro outlook. Sustained dollar demand and energy-led inflation risks are keeping the rupee under stress," said Jateen Trivedi, vice president at LKP Securities. "Bias remains weak unless crude prices show meaningful correction," he added.

Increase in farming cost

Anticipating a price hike, farmers have reportedly been stockpiling diesel for the upcoming wheat harvesting season. Farming activities, from plowing and sowing to irrigation and harvesting, are heavily dependent on diesel, and increases in diesel prices would raise the cost of farming.

Supply and cost of fertilisers is another big worry for farmers. India relies heavily on imports of certain fertiliser categories, including Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP), Muriate of Potassium (MOP), followed by urea and Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K). While 75% of the urea requirement is met domestically, domestic urea producers depend on LNG imports to operate their plants.

"Natural gas is vital for urea production, making up nearly 80% of production costs, and approximately 60% of LNG for urea is sourced from Qatar," says Pushan Sharma, Director, Crisil Intelligence.

Ongoing supply chain disruptions caused by the West Asian crisis are having a significant impact on fertiliser production and availability, as current stocks — around 180 lakh MT — are sufficient for only 2 to 2.5 months. Substantial demand during the Kharif season may further strain stock replenishment and affect crop yields.

"In case the conflict prolongs, the impact could become more severe, since fertiliser demand for the Kharif season is concentrated in the months of May to July," Sharma added.

Anand Kulkarni, Director, Crisil Ratings, says disruption in LNG and ammonia supplies for three months would lead to a 10-15% dip in production of both urea and complex fertilisers.

In 2025, India exported agricultural and food products worth $11.8 billion to West Asia, including key items such as cereals, fruits, vegetables and spices. Supply chain disruptions have affected these exports, impacting farmers' incomes.

Fiscal math

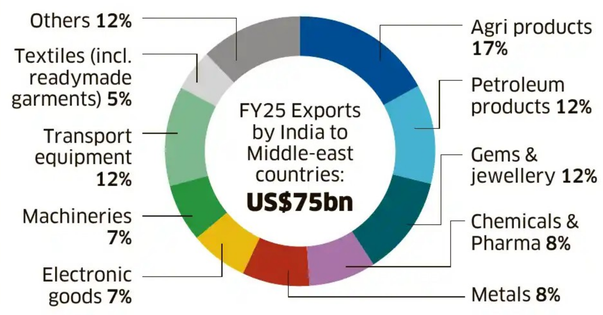
From fertiliser and LPG subsidies to the fiscal deficit and inflation, key macroeconomic indicators are set to be affected by the West Asia conflict. When the Union Budget 2026–27 projections were made, crude oil prices ranged between $60–70 per barrel. A surge of over 50% in crude prices is likely to significantly widen subsidy bills.

"Even if the crisis resolves imminently, the baseline energy prices would be higher than what had been presumed in the Union Budget for FY2027, complicating the Government of India's fiscal math," ICRA said in a note.

According to SBI Research, every $10 per barrel increase in crude oil prices may widen the country's current account deficit by 36 basis points in 2026-27. An average $120 per barrel of crude oil may widen the country's current account deficit to 2.5% of GDP.

It also poses an upside risk to the fiscal deficit target of 4.5% of GDP announced in the Union Budget. Prolonged elevated crude oil prices would further dampen the Union government's revenues, including corporate tax collections and dividend receipts from both downstream oil companies and other entities.

Commodity-wise breakdown of exports by India to Gulf countries



ECONOMIC IMPACT ON KEY SECTORS

1. Energy & commodities

■ India imports 85-90% of crude oil, about 60% of it from Strait of Hormuz. Prices have spiked, raising fuel costs and inflation. ■ About 90% of LPG imported comes from the Gulf. Government has ordered refineries to divert all propane/butane from petrochemicals to cooking gas.

2. Trade & shipping

■ Conflict has disrupted shipping lanes, raising freight costs and delaying shipments. ■ Agricultural exports on force majeure -- Basmati rice, apples, almonds undeliverable. Insurance for Gulf-bound vessels unavailable. $ 75 billion in exports (17% of total) at risk. ■ Fertilisers, petrochemicals and industrial inputs facing shortages.

3. Agriculture

■ Fertiliser shortages could raise costs. Ongoing issues may cut production by 10–15%, increase raw material and import costs, and push government's subsidy bill up by Rs 20,000–25,000 crore. ■ The Middle East accounted for about 40% of urea and DAP imports in the first nine months of fiscal 2026. ■ ₹60-65% of LNG and 75-80% of ammonia imports come from the region.

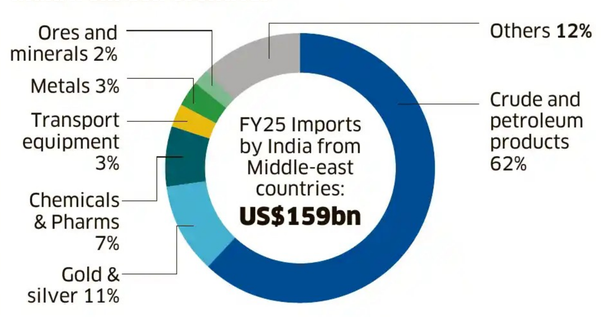
4. Industry & MSMEs

■ MSMEs dependent on imported chemicals, metals and textiles facing higher costs and supply delays. ■ Higher jet fuel and shipping costs squeeze margins.

5. GCC, FMCG & IT

■ India's strong trade and diaspora ties with GCC nations mean weaker demand and lower remittances. ■ Rising input costs of packaging, transport and edible oils, are squeezing margins. ■ IT exports face limited direct impact, but currency volatility and lower GCC spending may slow demand

Commodity-wise breakdown of imports by India from Gulf countries


Ores and minerals 2%
Others 12%
Metals 3%
Crude and petroleum products 62%
Transport equipment 3%
FY25 Imports by India from Middle-east countries: US$159bn
Chemicals & Pharms 7%
Gold & silver 11%

Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Jefferies and JM Financial, Media reports

COMPILED BY **MAHESH KULKARNI** DH GRAPHIC: **SAGAR M S**

Countrywise India's imports from West Asian countries

FY25 total imports from West Asian countries: **US$159bn**

Transgender rights, from Page 1

Courts play a crucial role in preventing the drift to rightlessness

By contrast, the 2019 Act not only included traditional identities and intersex persons but also explicitly recognised transmen and transwomen, 'whether or not such person has undergone sex reassignment surgery or hormone therapy or laser therapy or such other therapy' as well as genderqueer persons.

The intent to be inclusive is manifest in Section 4(2), which states that a person recognised as transgender shall have the 'right to self-perceived identity'. It is notable that Section 4(2) has been removed in the 2026 amendment.

Autonomy and dignity

The 2026 amendment does not recognise the right of persons to choose their gender, a principle that was central to the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) judgment. As the statement of objects and reasons notes, 'the legislative policy was and is intended to protect only those who face severe social exclusion due to biological reasons for no fault of their own and no choice of their own'. In other words, the law conditions the recognition of rights on the premise that gender expression must not involve choice. Under this interpretation, being transgender is separated from both autonomy and dignity.

The policy is also to exclude those who choose to live outside the gender binary. The 2026 Bill declares that, 'the purpose was and is not to protect each and every class of persons with various gender identities, self-perceived/sex gender identities or gender fluidities.' The 2026 Bill makes it clear that it has no place for the community of people who dare to choose their gender and express their gender in a way that challenges social stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. The 2026 Bill appears to marginalise or erase communities identifying as genderqueer, non-binary, trans men and trans women.

Even for those who fall within the 2026 definition of transgender, the law maintains a persistent suspicion of the right to self-identify. To obtain a transgender identity certificate, an individual must first secure a certificate from a Medical Board and then submit it to the District Magistrate, who may issue the certificate only if deemed "necessary or desirable." This provision grants the District Magistrate discretion to deny the certificate based on

personal judgement, creating space for biases and prejudices to influence decision-making.

This distrust of the community is also reflected in the requirement that medical institutions which have done gender transition surgeries must furnish details of such persons to the concerned District Magistrate, a provision that undermines the right to privacy.

At its core, the law reflects discomfort with individuals choosing to identify as transgender. It takes this 'discomfort' a step further by criminalising anyone who compels a person to 'dress, present or conduct themselves outwardly as transgender' by 'force, allurement, deception or undue influence.' The intent of this provision is clear. The authors of the amendment appear to discourage people from identifying as transgender and, to achieve this, criminalise anyone who assists a transgender person in asserting their identity, framing such support as 'allurement' or 'undue influence'.

The 2026 Bill represents a regression in terms of rights. In *Navtej Singh Johar v Union of India*, which decriminalised same-sex relations, the Supreme Court recognised the principle of non-retrogression, meaning that once rights are recognised, they cannot be taken away. It is the responsibility of the constitutional courts to ensure that the transgender community's right to self-definition of gender, dignity and autonomy continues to be protected and there is no regression from rights to rightlessness.

This aligns with the core requirements of constitutional morality.

(Arvind Narrain is the president of the People's Union for Civil Liberties-Karnataka)

War intensifies as Houthis fire first missile at Israel

ON BOIL: Iran-backed rebels' entry could further complicate war

DUBAI, AP

Iranian-backed Houthi rebels claimed a missile launch toward Israel early Saturday, their first since the war in West Asia started. The Israeli military said it intercepted the projectile.

Houthi involvement could further complicate the war

Houthi Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree said on the rebels' Al-Masirah satellite television station Saturday that the Houthis launched a barrage of ballistic missiles toward what he described as "sensitive Israeli military sites" in southern Israel.

The attack came hours after Saree signalled in a vague statement Friday that the rebels would join the war.

Saturday's assault calls into question whether the Houthis will target commercial shipping in the Red Sea corridor, as they did during the Israel-Hamas war.

About $1 trillion worth of goods passed through the Red Sea annually before the war. The rebels also fired drones at Israel.

The Houthis have held Yemen's capital, Sanaa, since 2014. Saudi Arabia launched a war against the Houthis on behalf of Yemen's exiled government in 2015 and the rebels had thus far stayed out of the recent conflict due to their uneasy ceasefire with Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, Israeli airstrikes on Iran and Lebanon continued Saturday. Iran sent missiles toward Israel with loud booms heard in Jerusalem.

Sirens went off around Israel's southern city of Beer Sheba and near Israel's main nuclear research centre as Iran and Hezbollah fired on Israel overnight.

Explosions filled the air in Tel Aviv, where Israel's Fire and Rescue Service said it responded to 11 impact sites.

In a related development, more than two dozen US troops have been wounded in Iranian attacks on Saudi Arabia's Prince Sultan Air Base in the past week, according to two people who have been briefed on the matter.

Iran fired six ballistic missiles and 29 drones at the base Friday, injuring at least 15 troops, including five seriously, according to the sources who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Further, Kuwait International Airport was targeted by multiple drone attacks on Saturday that caused significant damage to its radar system but resulted in no casualties.

The latest attacks happened after Trump claimed that talks on ending the war were going "very well".

However, the Iranian foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, told his Turkish counterpart by phone that Iran was sceptical about recent diplomatic efforts to stop the war.

War in West Asia

Iranian media says US-Israeli strikes killed more than a dozen people overnight

Iran's FM says Tehran sceptical about the recent diplomatic efforts to stop war

- Iran claims it struck Ukraine-related **drone warehouse** in Dubai
- Qatar and Ukraine sign defence agreement on countering **threats from missiles and drones**
- Lebanon says Israeli strike **killed three journalists**

Houthi supporters demonstrate in solidarity with Iran, in Sanaa, Yemen. REUTERS

- **Kuwait International Airport** targeted by multiple drone attacks, causing significant **damage to its radar system**
- Iran fired **6 ballistic missiles, 29 drones** at Saudi Arabia's Prince Sultan air base on Friday, injuring at least 15 US troops, including five seriously
- Israel military says **9 soldiers injured** in southern **Lebanon**; **11 people injured** in missile attack in central Israel
- **Amphibious assault ship USS Tripoli** arrives in West Asia amid speculation about deployment of **US troops in Iran**

Counter fake news: Centre

In its first meeting, the informal Group of Ministers on West Asia asked Central government departments to counter "rumours, misinformation and fake news" and work in coordination with state and district administrations.
Details on Page 8

Five Indians injured in UAE

Five Indians were injured in the UAE by the fall of debris in the vicinity of the Khalifa Economic Zones Abu Dhabi (KEZAD) following interception of a ballistic missile by the country's air defence system, the Abu Dhabi Media Office said in a social media post.

LPG tanker reaches Gujarat from Kuwait

Indian-flagged 'Jag Vasant' carrying 47,000 metric tonnes (MT) of LPG arrived at Vadinar port in Gujarat's Jamnagar after crossing the Strait of Hormuz, an official said on Saturday. MT Jag Vasant was anchored at 8.30 pm on Friday, loaded from Mina Al Ahmadi Port, Kuwait. It is set for ship-to-ship (STS) transfer at anchorage. The vessel is currently transferring 17,600 metric tonnes of LPG to a daughter vessel. Cargo of 20,000 MT on 'Jag Vasant' will be discharged at Mumbai and another around 9,000 MT will later be discharged at Mangaluru.

West, North & South corporations push to develop & maintain roads, parks, lights

As per budgets, all 5 civic bodies widen their resources

BENGALURU, DHNS

Three more of Bengaluru's five municipal corporations presented their budgets for 2026-27 on Saturday, allocating a significant chunk of their own resources for maintaining roads, parks and streetlights. They proposed using government grants for infrastructure development.

The Bengaluru West City Corporation (BWCC) — the most populous of all five municipal bodies in the city — has projected a total budgetary outlay of Rs 4,733 crore, surpassing the North Corporation (Rs 4,341.2 crore) and the East Corporation (Rs 3,890 crore).

Curiously, the West Corporation had struggled to pay staff salaries just months after its formation last year.

The West Corporation earmarked about 60% of the total outlay for infrastructure projects, mostly roadworks. It will also spend a substantial chunk of Rs 635 crore on Sugama Sanchara — Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar's pet project — to build new roads along stormwater drain buffer zones and elevated corridors.

To keep the MLAs in good humour, the corporation has earmarked small grants for different projects in all assembly segments.

The North Corporation's budget attempted to balance infrastructure development and welfare, allocating funds for health, education and climate action initiatives. On the infrastructure front, it plans to widen four roads for Rs 25 crore and improve footpaths.

The South Corporation allocated Rs 433 crore for large-scale upgrades of arterial and sub-arterial roads. It also proposed to redevelop Bannerghatta Road, from Dairy Circle to NICE Road.

As per budget documents, the East, South and North corporations performed well in raising revenue through property tax, which also reduces their dependence on government support.

Notably, the property tax revenue projected by the West, East and Central corporations for the new fiscal year is more than double the revenue generated in the last six months of 2025-26. This indicates overestimation.

Given that the civic bodies are expected to self-sustain, all five corporations have widened their revenue sources through policies such as regularisation of 'B' khata properties, premium FAR and advertisement fees.
▸ **Budget, Page 4**

How each corporation fares in revenue

Civic body	Property tax* (2026-27)	Property tax (Sept 2025-26)	GoI & GoK grant	Budget outlay
Central	Rs 780 cr	Rs 270 cr	Rs 793 cr	Rs 3,427 cr
East	Rs 1,120 cr	Rs 506 cr	Rs 462 cr	Rs 3,890 cr
West	Rs 872 cr	Rs 252 cr	Rs 1,259 cr	Rs 4,733 cr
North	Rs 826 cr	Rs 452 cr	Rs 945 cr	Rs 4,341 cr
South	Rs 780 cr	Rs 396 cr	Rs 731 cr	Rs 3,826 cr

*Projections

Prof booked for calling student 'terrorist'

BENGALURU, DHNS: The city police on Saturday registered an FIR against a professor at the private PES University for allegedly making derogatory and communal remarks against a Muslim student during a classroom lecture.

According to the FIR, the alleged incident took place on March 24 at the university's Hosarekerehalli campus. Dr Muralidhar Deshpande, an adjunct professor, allegedly called the student a "terrorist" multiple times and made objectionable remarks in front of about 60 students. He made the remarks linking the student to global conflicts.
Details on Page 3D

Shah slams Mamata in 'charge sheet': TMC hits backs

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
KOLKATA, DHNS

Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday alleged that the Trinamool Congress government's policy of appeasing a particular community and facilitating illegal migration from Bangladesh endangered the national security of India, prompting West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to accuse the BJP of orchestrating communal violence during the Ram Navami celebration in Murshidabad.

Shah, who released a "charge sheet" against the Mamata government, said the BJP would surely win the Assembly elections in West Bengal and, for the first time, the saffron party would be in power in "Anga", "Banga", and "Kalinga" (Bihar, Bengal and Odisha).

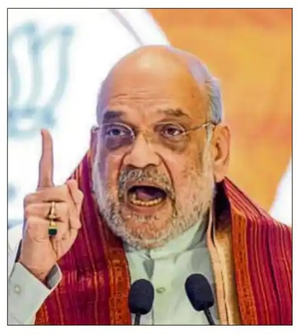
Mamata, on the other hand, vowed to drive away the BJP from West Bengal first, and then to lead the TMC, along with other opposition parties, in ousting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party from power in the Centre.

A day after a heated exchange between two groups over the Ram Navami celebration escalated into violence at Raghunathganj in Murshidabad, normalcy was restored in the area.

"The BJP has orchestrated violence during Ram Navami in Raghunathganj," Mamata said, while addressing an election rally in Raniganj in West Bengal on Saturday.

"Bengal has always believed in unity in diversity. Bengal stands for inclusivity and togetherness. Bengal lives by the sacred philosophy of 'Dharma Jar Jar, Utsav Sabar' (people may have different faiths, but festivals are for everyone). Bengal will never tolerate violence and hooliganism in the name of faith," she said, alleging that the Election Commission had transferred efficient police and administrative officials of the state government from key positions so that the BJP could trigger violence and reap electoral dividends.

"They (the BJP) could not win hearts, so they are trying to win through fear, to create chaos. We will not allow anyone to poison the atmosphere. We will not allow hooliganism to disturb our unity."
▸ **Amit Shah, Page 4**



Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Kolkata. PTI

WEST BENGAL
Assembly Poll

60 new faces in DMK list

Tamil Nadu's ruling DMK on Saturday re-nominated a majority of its incumbent legislators, including Chief Minister M K Stalin, his deputy Udhayanidhi, and their cabinet colleagues, for the April 23 assembly elections, while giving tickets to about 60 new faces, including those who have worked at the grassroots level.
Details on Page 9

Nepal's former PM Oli held over Gen Z protest crackdown

KATHMANDU, PTI: Nepal's former Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli was arrested on Saturday, a day after the newly formed government of Balendra Shah implemented the probe commission report on the Gen Z protest that rocked the nation last year.

Oli, also CPN-UML chair, was arrested at the Gundu area of Bhaktapur district, 12 km east of Kathmandu, early Saturday morning, according to the police.

Former Home Minister and Nepali Congress leader Ramesh Lekhak has also been arrested from his residence at Katunje of Suryabinayak Municipality in Bhaktapur district, police added.

Both Oli and Lekhak have been arrested on charges of their involvement in suppressing the Gen Z movement of September 8 and 9 last year, in which 76 people, including around two dozen youths, were killed.

The probe commission formed to investigate the incident surrounding the Gen Z movement has recommended legal action against Oli and Lekhak, among others, under criminal offence.

Nepal's newly formed government, led by Balendra Shah, in its first cabinet meeting on Friday, decided to immediately implement the recommendations made by the probe commission.

"Nobody is above the law," wrote Home Minister Sudhan Gurung in a social media post after the arrest.

"We have taken under control former Prime Minister KP Oli and former Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak. This is not a revenge against anybody, just the beginning of justice," he said.

Both Oli and Lekhak have been taken into detention at the Kathmandu District Police Circle in Bhadrakali, said the police.

Nepal's former PM K P Sharma Oli (C) is escorted by police as he is brought to the hospital following his arrest in Kathmandu on Saturday. AFP

ON THE AIR MAP

People pose for pictures at the newly constructed Noida International Airport after its inauguration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Jewar, Gautam Buddha Nagar district in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday. PTI

IndiGo plane makes emergency landing in Delhi

MUMBAI, PTI: A Delhi-bound IndiGo flight from Visakhapatnam, carrying 160 passengers on board, made an emergency landing at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport on Saturday due to an engine failure, according to sources.

There were 160 passengers on the Boeing 737 aircraft, the source said.

"Full emergency was declared at Indira Gandhi International Airport at 10.39 for IndiGo Visakhapatnam-Delhi flight 6E 579 due to one engine failure," a source said.

The flight landed at 10.59 am as per flight tracking website flightradar24.com.

Ex-Raymond chief Singhania passes away

MUMBAI, PTI: Former Raymond chairman Vijaypat Singhania died here on Saturday evening, his family said.

He was 87.

His son Gautam Singhania, the group's current chairman and managing director, announced the death on the microblogging platform 'X'.

Singhania passed away "peacefully" in Mumbai, and the last rites will be performed on Sunday, a Raymond Group spokesperson said.

Vijaypat Singhania, a recipient of the Padma Bhushan, was also a keen aviator and held a world record for the highest altitude gained in a hot air balloon.
Details on Page 8

First Great Indian Bustard chick born in Guj after a decade

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

After a decade, a Great Indian Bustard chick was born in Gujarat, raising hopes for the critically endangered species' recovery in the grasslands of Kutch.

With only three female GIBs surviving in the wild in Kutch, there was no possibility of a fertile egg in the natural setting.

In a conservation experiment, scientists from the Wildlife Institute of India took an arduous 770-km road journey to transport an incubated egg from a breeding centre in Rajasthan to the desired nesting site in Kutch, leading to the conservation success, the Union environment ministry said here on Saturday.

A female GIB, tagged in August 2025, laid an infertile egg in Kutch, where the local population had lost all its males long ago.

A captive-bred GIB egg from the conservation breeding programme was transported by road for over 19 hours from Sam in Rajasthan to Naliya in Gujarat in a handheld portable incubator. The egg was successfully replaced with the infertile egg in the nest on March 22.

The female completed the incubation of the fertile egg and successfully hatched the chick on March 26. The field monitoring team observed the young chick being reared by its foster mother in its natural habitat.

"This is a significant achievement in the recovery of the critically endangered species," said Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav.

The number of birds in two conservation breeding centres at Sam and Ramdevra in Rajasthan has reached 73, with the addition of five new chicks during the current breeding season. Nearly half of these birds are from eggs collected from the wild and the rest are bred in captivity

Yadav said India would move toward rewilding birds in the near future as part of long-term conservation planning.

India's GIB population has shrunk drastically over the years, with fewer than 150 of these birds remaining in the wild, most of them in Rajasthan.

Around 130 of them are in the Desert National Park and the Indian Army's Pokhran firing range at Jaisalmer.

A GIB chick with its foster mother after hatching under a conservation programme in Kutch. PTI

BIG GAME

High security and 'red' fever take over as city hosts IPL opener

ASHWIN BM
BENGALURU, DHNS

The M Chinnaswamy Stadium premises transformed into a sea of red on Saturday evening as the 19th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) kicked off with the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) taking on Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the season opener.

The stadium and its surroundings were turned into a fortress with multi-layered security aimed at preventing a repeat of last year's deadly stampede.

Police personnel blocked off the stadium's perimeter with extensive barricading. Unlike previous years, where ticketless fans gathered near the gates or bargained for black-market tickets, the authorities enforced a strict "No Ticket, No Entry" zone around the stadium.

"We scanned every individual. From Gate 17 to Gate 5, the scrutiny was intense," a policeman said during the entry process. "We had separate queues for men and women. Prohibited items, including plastic bottles and even small items, were confiscated at the gates."

To manage the crowd of nearly 30,000, fans were advised to arrive at least four to five hours before the first ball.

Top officials, including Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Karthik Reddy and Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs), personally monitored the flow of fans to ensure no bottlenecks occurred on Queen's Road or Cubbon Road.

Fans at Chinnaswamy Stadium for the IPL match between RCB and SRH. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Strict measures were in place where fans carrying bags were directed to external baggage counters, as no bags or electronic accessories like neckbands were allowed inside. The usual swarm of jersey and whistle vendors on the footpaths was moved significantly further away from the stadium to keep pedestrian walkways clear.

The atmosphere remained electric despite the stringent rules. Fans travelled from across the globe to see King Kohli in action.

One fan, who travelled all the way from Australia specifically for the match, told *DH*, "Getting an RCB ticket was harder than the flight from Australia! We were here for Virat and the incredible Bengaluru atmosphere."

A long-time fan noted that the "security is very strict this time". "I've been coming since the 1996 World Cup, I've seen lathi-charges and chaos before. But today, it feels managed. They are even checking QR codes before we get near the main gates," the fan, standing outside the Cubbon Park Metro Station, said.

Another fan, who travelled from Mysuru with his family, shared his excitement. "We never miss a match. This year, the police are doing a great job, no pushing, no shoving. It's very smooth." His young son, in an RCB jersey, added, "I just want to see Virat Kohli! This time, the cup is ours."

A senior police officer told *DH* that they made "very extensive and complete arrangements".
▸ **IPL, Page 4**

> I've been coming since the 1996 World Cup, I've seen lathi-charges and chaos before. But today, it feels managed. They are even checking QR codes before we get near the main gates.
>
> **A fan**

BENGALURU BUDGET: North, South & West corpns plan wider roads, better footpaths & something for all

MAJOR ALLOCATIONS

Discretionary use of Bengaluru Development minister
- Rs 60 cr
- Rs 48.31 cr
- Rs 60 cr

Maintenance and development of arterial and sub-arterial roads
- Rs 35 cr
- Rs 105 cr
- Rs 55 cr

Development of junctions and footpaths
- Rs 50 cr
- Rs 36.75 cr
- Rs 50 cr

Storm water drain maintenance
- Rs 12 cr
- Rs 15.75 cr
- Rs 12.5 cr

Street light maintenance
- Rs 61.15 cr
- Rs 110 crore
- Rs 74.21 cr

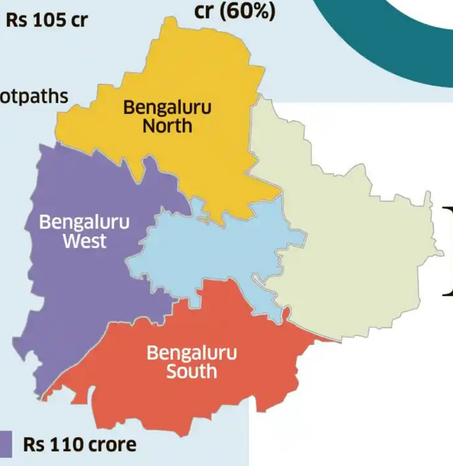
Lakes
- Rs 50 cr
- Rs 25.25 cr
- Rs 17.5 cr

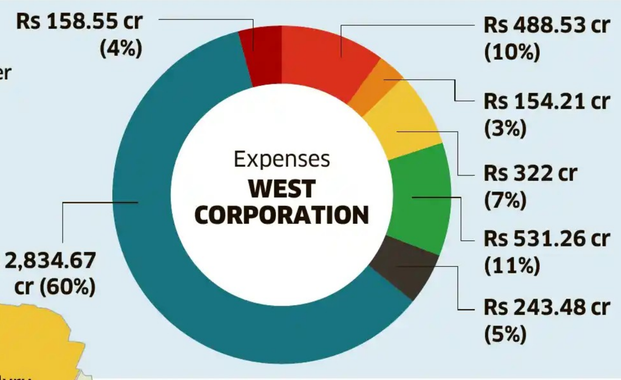
Social welfare
- Rs 28.98 cr
- Rs 209 cr
- Rs 265 cr

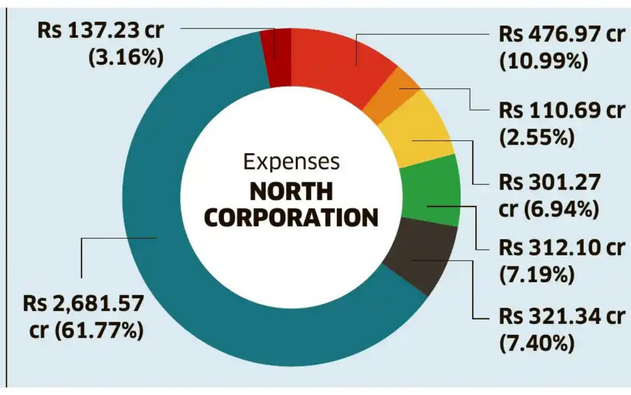
Health
- Rs 93 cr
- Rs 198 cr
- Rs 92.95 cr

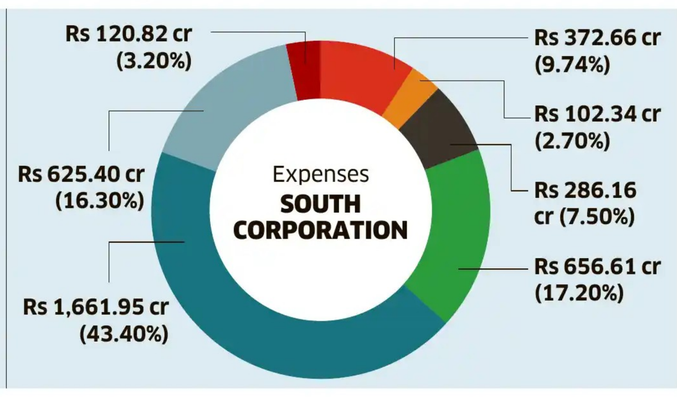
Land acquisition
- Rs 17 cr
- Rs 20 cr
- Rs 50.45 cr

Municipal bond (loan)
- Rs 200 cr
- Rs 200 cr
- Rs 200 cr









Establishment Expenses · Administrative Expenses · Solid Waste Management Expenses · Operation and Maintenance Expenses · Programme Expenses (Health,Education and Welfare) · Development works · Development Works undertaken by B-SMILE · Refund of Deposits and Cess

Allocations to B-SMILE

Major grants	North Corporation	West Corporation	South Corporation
Advertisement fee	Rs 54 cr	Rs 116 cr	Rs 126 cr
Premium FAR	Rs 420 cr	Rs 380 cr	Rs 360 cr
Sugama Sanchara	Rs 139.4 cr	Rs 635 cr	Rs 139 cr

Allocations to BSWML

Collection and disposal of waste, mechanical sweeping machines, development works	Rs 317 cr	Rs 320 cr	Rs 305 cr

Three non-traditional sources of revenue

Corpn	Khata regularization (B to A)	Advertisement fee	Premium FAR	Total
Central	Rs 7.5 cr	Rs 142.5 cr	Rs 350 cr	Rs 500 cr
East	Rs 225 cr	Rs 120 cr	Rs 600 cr	Rs 945 cr
West	Rs 563 cr	Rs 116 cr	Rs 380 cr	Rs 1,059 cr
North	Rs 680 cr	Rs 54 cr	Rs 420 cr	Rs 1,154 cr
South	Rs 225 cr	Rs 126 cr	Rs 360 cr	Rs 711 cr

Focus on environment and lakes

To tackle climate change and mitigate air pollution, BNCC has earmarked Rs 20 crore. In a pilot programme, it has started work at a defunct quarry in Hennur Bande, where temperatures were reportedly high owing to heat island effect. A playground surrounded by miyawaki plantation has been planned in the area.

Air pollution measurement equipment and measures to reduce air and water pollution have also been planned.

An amount of Rs 40 crore has been kept aside for development of lakes, apart from Rs 8 crore for maintenance.

Srinivasapura, Mallasandra Gudde and Singapura lakes are planned for comprehensive development. The revival of dried-up Banaswadi lake, Lingarajapura, Battaguntepalya and Ramachandrapura lakes is also planned.

In West Corpn budget, DCM's pet project gets lion's share of funds

Small grants for projects in assembly segments to keep MLAs in good humour

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

Sugama Sanchara' - Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar's pet project - received the lion's share of the Rs 635 crore funds in the maiden budget presented by Bengaluru West City Corporation (BWCC) for 2026-27 on Saturday.

The project involves building new roads along the stormwater drain buffer zones, elevated corridors etc. The allocation is also significant as it matches total funds earmarked by four other corporations combined.

According to budget documents, the West City Corporation, which has 112 wards, has pegged a total outlay of Rs 4,732 crore and earmarked about 60% of the total expenditure for infrastructure projects mostly roadworks. It estimates a revenue surplus of just Rs 8 lakh.

Presenting the budget, Corporation Commissioner Dr K V Rajendra recalled the significance of all 10 assembly constituencies that the civic body covers.

To keep the MLAs in good humour, the budget has earmarked a small grant for a different types of projects in all assembly segments such as 50-bed hospital in Yeshwanthpur, Rs 5 crore each for Malleswaram and RR Nagar, Rs 4 crore for Dasarahalli, Rs 5 crore for developing Dr Rajkumar Kalakshetra in Rajajinagar and Rs 3 crore for completing observation tower in Kumaraswamy Park, Basavanagudi, among others.

To meet the demands from ward leaders, the budget has set aside Rs 2.25 crore each for all 112 wards. In all, the corporation has earmarked Rs 253.5 crore to be spent on desilting drains, fixing footpaths etc. Similar grants have also been provided by other corporations.

In all, the budget has set aside Rs 2,834.67 crore for public works and developmental activities. Almost half this allocation is a state government grant. The budget has proposed widening of eight roads, including Ittamadu Road, Kurubarahalli Main Road, Mahalashmipura Access Road and Herohalli Access Road, but the budget has set aside only Rs 8 crore for the civil work and Rs 20 crore for land acquisition.

A budgetary allocation of Rs 2 crore was made for improving the condition of Gorguntepalya Junction. Speaking to the reporters, Rajendra said the corporation would add one new lane at the junction by taking possession of private land. The extra lane, he said, would help the traffic moving towards Nagarabhavi.

During the presentation of the budget, Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao delivered the welcome address. Rajajinagar MLA S Suresh Kumar and MLC MR Seetharam were in attendance.

Bengaluru West City Corporation Commissioner K V Rajendra presents the budget for 2026-27 on Saturday. PHOTO/BWCC

MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS
- **Rs 25 cr** for mechanical sweepers
- **Rs 10.50 cr** for Kempegowda Study Centre
- **Rs 5 cr** for removing silt and clearing encroachments from Yediyur and Chikkallasandra lakes
- **Rs 1 cr** to construct new bridge across the drain in Vidyanagar, Peenya Industrial Area
- **10 towing vehicles,** one per assembly constituency on a contract basis
- **Rs 25 cr** for construction of Kempegowda Bhavan in Hampinagar ward
- **Rs 10 cr** for development of Kumbalagodu electric crematorium

North prioritises citizen amenities, welfare

To widen 7.95 km of roads, develop 100 km of footpaths

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC) on Saturday presented its maiden budget with an outlay of Rs 4,341.2 crore — second largest among the five municipal bodies—striking a balance between infrastructure development and welfare, with allocations for health, education and climate action initiatives.

On the infrastructure front, BNCC plans to widen four roads at a cost of Rs 25 crore to ease traffic congestion. The roads to be widened are Nitte Meenakshi Engineering College Road, Gas Pipeline Road near Sandeep Unnikrishnan Road, Dasarahalli Main Road and Hennur-Bagalur Road.

That apart, widening works are ongoing at other eight roads under BNCC. The total length of road to be widened is 7.95 km.

The budget has placed special focus on footpath improvements and has set an ambitious goal of developing and repairing 1,000 km of footpaths.

"We have allotted Rs 25 lakh per ward exclusively for footpath development and repairs. We are committed to developing 1,000 km of footpaths," said Pommala Sunil Kumar, commissioner, BNCC.

An amount of Rs 71.07 crore has been earmarked for various schemes. Half the allocation will go towards single-house scheme, with the rest funding housing through Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation, for eligible beneficiaries. The corporation plans to offer subsidies of up to Rs 5 lakh to around 1,420 beneficiaries.

On the health front, the corporation has earmarked funds to equip hospitals and extend dialysis services.

New schemes to provide financial aid to students and distribute laptops to students from weaker sections were also announced. Funds have been allocated to open a new school in Vinayaka Nagar.

The budget has something for every category of people — Rs 1.27 crore is earmarked for women's welfare, Rs 1.47 crore for senior citizen welfare programmes, Rs 73 lakh for welfare of transgender community and Rs 1 crore is allocated to provide financial assistance to athletes participating in national and international sports.

MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS
- **Rs 40 cr** for BNCC new office
- **Rs 10 cr** for BNCC office complex
- **Rs 4.08 cr** for e-Sarathi scheme to provide financial aid for 350 beneficiaries to purchase autos/cars
- **Rs 1 cr** to instal smart panels in municipal schools/colleges
- **Rs 6 cr** revenue expected from parking
- **Rs 7.6 cr** to distribute free laptops to students – 1,200 beneficiaries expected
- **Rs 7.1 cr** to provide e-vending vehicles to street vendors
- **Rs 11 cr** to provide grants to eligible voluntary organizations
- **Eight new transfer stations** to be constructed for waste management
- **Rs 10.51 cr** for comprehensive management of trees, wildlife conservation and forest activities
- **200 rainwater harvesting pits** to be constructed
- **Rs 14 cr** to establish a modern slaughter house
- **Rs 3 cr** for animal birth control programme (for 12,000 dogs)
- **Rs 5 cr** for rabies and combined vaccines (for 65,000 dogs)

GBA chief commissioner M Maheshwar Rao and BNCC commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar with others, during the budget presentation. PHOTO/ BNCC

GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao and Bengaluru south city commisioner Ramesh K N at the budget presentation on Saturday. PHOTO/BSCC

South city corporation places major push on road infra

Rs 3,826.43-cr outlay for 2026-27; Bannerghatta Road to be redeveloped

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

The South City Corporation's maiden budget has placed major thrust on road infrastructure.

The municipal corporation has allocated Rs 433 crore for large-scale upgrades of arterial and sub-arterial roads, along with ward roads, including scientific asphalt paving, pedestrian-friendly footpaths, integrated drainage systems and junction improvements.

On Saturday, BSCC commissioner Ramesh K N presented a Rs 3,826.43-crore budget for 2026–27, a marginal surplus of Rs 48.21 lakh.

With over 43% of expenditure earmarked for public works, the budget focuses on infrastructure expansion, decentralised governance, revenue mobilisation without tax hikes and urban sustainability.

An amount of Rs 50 crore has been set aside for junction development, pedestrian pathways and skywalk-related works over the next 3 years.

Development of Bannerghatta Raod, from Dairy Circle to NICE Road, is also proposed. A sum of Rs 50.45 crore has been earmarked for land acquisition, primarily for road widening, construct grade separators and junction improvements, through Transferable Development Rights. It has also proposed fast-tracking land acquisition.

It has prioritised administrative decentralisation by carving out 72 wards and proposing ward offices for service delivery. It has proposed a shift to paperless governance through e-office system.

On lakes, the budget says, of the 59 lakes in its limits, most are developed, with others to be taken up in phases. Plans include supplying treated water to maintain water levels, clearing encroachments & promoting tourism. 'Lake mitra' initiative proposes to involve citizens in conservation.

Despite ruling out increase in property tax, the corporation expects to mobilise over Rs 1,100 crore through improved tax compliance. Additional revenue streams include 'B' Khata to 'A' Khata conversion, advertisement policies and municipal bonds.

It projects substantial inflows from premium FAR charges, estimated at around Rs 360 crore, reflecting increased construction activity and demand for additional built-up area. Overall, the corporation plans to collect almost equal amounts in revenue from tax, cess and non tax sectors at 28%.

MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS
- **Rs 150 crore** for new BSCC office building opposite Banashankari temple
- **Rs 18.96 crore** for construction of 50-bed maternity hospital in Ejipura, aimed at strengthening maternal healthcare services
- **Boating facilities** in select lakes like Begur and Madiwala under PPP model.
- Widening of Subramanyapura Road at a cost of **Rs 20 crore** and of the stetch from Begur main road to Begur Koppa road at **Rs 40 crore.**
- **Rs 13.03 crore** for upgrading 25 urban primary health centres and 49 Namma Clinics.
- **18 new skywalks** under PPP model.
- **25,000 bamboo saplings** to be planted across the corporation limits.
- Establishing **one waste management centre in each ward** and deploying 8 mechanical street sweeping machines on rental basis.
- To establish an **additional animal birth control centre,** which can handle sterilization procedures of 50 stray dogs per day.

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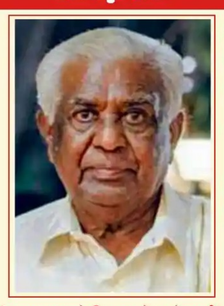

ಶ್ರೀ ವಿ.ಎಮ್. ಚಿಕ್ಕತಿಮ್ಮಾರೆಡ್ಡಿ

ಇವರು ದಿನಾಂಕ 28–03–2026 ರಂದು ಶನಿವಾರ ದೈವಾಧೀನರಾದರೆಂದು ತಿಳಿಸಲು ವಿಷಾದಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ.
ಇವರ ಅಂತ್ಯಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ 29–03–2026 ಭಾನುವಾರದಂದು ಮಧ್ಯಾಹ್ನ 2:00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಅದ್ದೆ ವಿಶ್ವನಾಥಪುರ ಸ್ವಗ್ರಾಮದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆರವೇರಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಇಂತಿ ದುಃಖಿತಪ್ತರು: **ಕುಟುಂಬವರ್ಗದವರು**

2 composite girders erected

BENGALURU, DHNS: Namma Metro has erected two of the four composite girders near the Marathahalli bridge as part of the Blue Line construction work under Phase 2A.

Teams from Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited and Shankaranarayana Constructions erected two composite girders on junction of Outer Ring Road with Old Airport Road in the early hours of Saturday. Citizens' group Mahadevapura Task Force-Mobility, which has tracked the girder installation, remaining composite girders will be installed between midnight and 3 am on Sunday.

DRDO Sports Complex metro station to be named after Bagmane

BENGALURU, DHNS: The DRDO Sports Complex Metro Station, being built on the Blue Line under Phase 2A, will be named after Bagmane, according to Namma Metro.

On Saturday, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) entered into a grant agreement with Bagmane Developers Pvt Ltd for financial participation in the development of metro infrastructure. Bagmane will contribute Rs 40 crore for the station's construction and has already paid Rs 20 crore.

The participation framework, including the tenure and associated consideration, has been calibrated taking into account the location of the station, project characteristics and the limited scope of entitlements. Bagmane Developers will contribute for the enhancement of the interior and external façade of the metro station, BMRCL said in a statement.

In exchange, BMRCL will grant the station naming rights to Bagmane Developers for 20 years. According to the BMRCL, this arrangement represents a grant-based participation model during the construction phase, where the private partner contributes towards capital expenditure of the metro infrastructure. The rights granted under this agreement are limited to naming rights only, without any additional entitlements such as advertisement rights, commercial space or connectivity components.

The DRDO Sports Complex metro station is part of the 19.75-km Silk Board Junction-KR Puram corridor, which will have 17 stations and is slated to open this December.

This is the sixth agreement under BMRCL's innovative financing framework for Phase 2A. Two more innovative agreements are to be finalised shortly, BMRCL said.

BOTTLENECKS PERSIST Poor waste segregation at source, lack of pipeline the challenges

Amid LPG crisis, Bengaluru bets big on biogas plants

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

Gas storage tanks at the Kasa Rasa plant in Koramangala.
DH PHOTOS/PRASHANTH S

A worker clears wet waste at the Kasa Rasa plant in Koramangala.

Across Bengaluru, seven functional biogas plants are being converted into fuel facilities but the transition is only halfway complete. Originally designed to turn wet waste into cooking gas and electricity, these plants are now attempting to scale up their operations.

The renewed attention towards biogas follows the recent LPG shortages that disrupted commercial and domestic kitchens, pushing them to reconsider alternatives. But with only some biogas plants functioning optimally, the question is whether the city can rely on a system it has yet to fully operationalise.

NGOs Adamya Chetana Foundation, ISKCON and other kitchens producing food for massive consumption have set up their own biogas plants.

Bengaluru generates about 3,000 tonnes of wet waste daily but produces only about 2.5 tonnes of biogas.

The city has seven functional biogas plants at Koramangala, Jayanagar, Pattabhirama Nagar, Domlur, Gandhinagar, Aramane Nagar and Horohalli. Four more have been set up - at Varthur, KR Market, Hemmigepura and Singapura - but are not functional yet. One more will come up at Kannahalli, off Magadi Road.

These plants use organic waste to produce gas that is further processed into electricity to run their own generators and supply power to nearby places.

The Koramangala plant - one of the city's oldest and best-functioning facilities - was set up eight years ago. It is one of the very few plants that process both dry and wet waste. It receives about 18 tonnes of waste — 13 tonnes of wet waste and five tonnes of dry waste — from all parts of Koramangala.

The plant is situated below a high-tension wire, where other buildings cannot be constructed.

The local residents' welfare associations are creating awareness among citizens to segregate waste. The municipal corporation collects wet waste five days a week and dry waste twice a week to make segregation easier.

Padmashree Balaram, president of the First Block Koramangala Residents Welfare Association, said: "Thirteen tonnes of waste comes here but our job as a residents' association never stops. The biogas produced in our centre is supplied via a pipeline to the adjacent restaurant, which agreed to take all the gas generated here. Because of the high-tension wire, we cannot have a bottling plant here."

The plant produces about 300 kg of biogas which it supplies to the Empire Restaurant kitchen through pipelines. The pipelines have meters in both the plant and kitchen to measure gas consumption.

Gaffar S, Public Relations Officer, NKP Empire Ventures, the company that runs the restaurant chain, said: "We have been taking biogas from the Kasa Rasa plant since 2023. We use about 120 kg of gas per day. During the LPG crisis, we designated our Koramangala kitchen as the head kitchen and continued to supply certain food items from there to a few of our other branches."

He added that the biogas plant produces fewer carbon emissions and is also eco-friendly. "If we get the opportunity to use it in all our kitchens, we would definitely do it," he said.

In Horohalli, the Sustainable Impacts plant is operated by Carbon Masters India Pvt Ltd in collaboration with the NGO Hasiru Dala. The plant processes about 50 tonnes of wet waste generated and segregated from various parts of the city and produces about 1.5-2 tonnes of biogas, which is then supplied to Konark Hotel and other restaurants across the city.

The wet waste is crushed and mixed with water to form a slurry, which then goes to an anaerobic digester where bio-organisms consume the organic content. Impurities such as hydrogen sulfide and carbon dioxide are removed. The final product is biomethane, which is compressed into gas cylinders or let through pipelines.

Scan to see how Bengaluru's waste becomes biogas.

The plant has also signed agreements with GAIL Gas Ltd to infuse gas into pipelines that the PSU would lay across the city.

Future of biogas plants

Bengaluru's four other biogas plants - at Varthur, KR Market, Hemmigepura and Singapura - have been set up but are not yet functional.

"We may not start the KR Market plant soon but we are looking forward to operationalising all other non-functional plants," Karee Gowda, CEO of Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML), told *DH*.

He added that a new plant would soon open at Kannahalli, off Magadi Road, under a public-private partnership to process about 1,000 tonnes of waste.

Gowda said there were no plans to convert electricity plants to produce cooking gas as their final product.

Ramalinga Reddy, Minister for Transport and Muzrai, was instrumental in setting up the Kasa Rasa plant eight years ago in Koramangala, which falls within his BTM Layout assembly constituency.

Speaking to *DH*, Reddy said the plant should be a model. "I do not understand why this has not been replicated in other parts of the city. In my previous stint as Urban Development Minister, I spoke to (BBMP) commissioners about setting up more plants but that initiative did not get through. Even today, I am pushing for the plants."

Reddy believes that if the city could process all the waste it generates, "we can solve both the waste problem and energy problem at once."

The new plants may help in solving the problem, he added.

While biogas is better than LPG in terms of price, clarification and calorific value, it might not reach the kitchens of households as Bengaluru lacks a gas pipeline system.

Prof booked for calling student 'terrorist' in class

Private university suspends him pending inquiry

BENGALURU, DHNS:

The police on Saturday registered an FIR against a professor at PES University for making derogatory and communal remarks against a Muslim student during a classroom lecture.

Police registered the case suo motu after a video of the incident surfaced on the microblogging site X. Members of the National Students' Union of India (NSUI), Karnataka, also submitted a complaint on Friday. Police initially did not treat the matter as serious because college authorities had already suspended the professor.

According to the FIR, the incident allegedly took place on March 24 at the university's Hosarekerehalli campus.

Dr Muralidhar Deshpande, an adjunct professor in the Faculty of Management and Commerce, allegedly called the BBA fourth-semester student a "terrorist" multiple times during class and made a series of objectionable remarks in front of about 60 students, creating a hostile and humiliating environment, adds the FIR.

Police have invoked Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) Sections 299 (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) and 352 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace). Both sections are bailable.

In its complaint, NSUI Bengaluru Central District president Lakshya Raj V said the video triggered outrage among student groups. He further alleged that the professor made the remarks linking the student to global conflicts and used abusive language targeting his religious identity.

PES University authorities issued an order suspending Deshpande pending an internal inquiry into the incident. Sources said the professor submitted a written apology to the management, though not directly to the student. The head of the department also reportedly apologised on his behalf. When reached for comment, PES University Registrar K S Sridhar told *DH* he was unaware of the incident as he was currently on leave.

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Techie clicks on fake traffic fine link, loses Rs 7.22L

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 37-year-old tech professional lost Rs 7.22 lakh to a cyber fraud after clicking on a fake traffic fine link and installing a malicious mobile application.

The victim, a resident of Electronics City, received a message on March 26, stating that a traffic violation fine of Rs 1,120 had been imposed.

The message included a link to check the fine details.

Believing the message, he clicked the link and was prompted to download an application resembling the mParivahan app. He had recently purchased a new car and had been using the official app for vehicle-related services, which made the message appear credible.

After installing the application, it behaved suspiciously and disappeared.

Shortly thereafter, he began receiving multiple transaction alerts on his phone.

On checking, he found that several unauthorised transactions had been carried out using his credit card on various online platforms, resulting in a total loss of Rs 7.22 lakh.

The victim told *DH* his credit card had a limit of around Rs 12 lakh. The bank later blocked the card after detecting suspicious transactions, preventing further misuse.

Based on a complaint, the Electronics City police have registered a case and suspect that fraudsters used a phishing link and malware to steal the victim's card details and undertake the transactions.

Golden Hour Network for trauma care

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Golden Hour Network (GHN) was launched at the HOSMAT Traumacon 2026, a practice-driven trauma conference, on Saturday.

GHN is a structured, professional trauma care community that brings together surgeons trained within the HOSMAT ecosystem under a shared commitment to improve trauma care.

Named after the critical 'Golden Hour', the first hour following injury, where timely intervention determines survival.

Over the next six months, the GHN aims to establish its governance structure, onboard senior alumni and initiate its first clinical engagements.

The conference featured a comprehensive, full-day scientific agenda with over 25 expert-led sessions, covering upper limb trauma, complex lower limb injuries, paediatric trauma, non-union surgeries, complication management, medico-legal aspects and orthopaedic practice efficiency.

Anisha Chandy Eckardt, Managing Director, HOSMAT Hospitals, said: "Trauma care in India does not suffer from a lack of clinical expertise but from gaps in time, training and integration."

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- Michael Varekamp Quintet feat. Alexander 'The Hurricane' Beets — From New Orleans to New York
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◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Medical Lab Technologists Conference: Inauguration by D K Shivakumar; guests include Dinesh Gundu Rao, Dr C N Manjunath, and Uday B Garudachar; Karnataka State Medical Lab Technologists Association; Kuvempu Kalakshetra, KR Road, VV Puram; 9 am.

Kaladarpana Kempegowda Sevaratna International Awards: Presentation by Basavaraj Horatti; guests include G K Ashwath Harithas and D S Vishwanath; awardees include Ajit Banger and T V Babu; Kaladarpana Art Reflects; Nayana Auditorium, Kannada Bhavana, JC Road; 10 am.

International Women's Day Celebration and Poetry Session: Felicitation by S T Somashekar and Geetha Ramanujam; Chaired by H S Sudhindra Kumar; Yeshwanthpur Constituency Kannada Sahitya Parishath; Sri Kalikamba Temple Hall, 6th Main Road, Kengeri Satellite Town; 9.30 am.

Internet Safety for Commoners: Talk by Girish Shankar; Manthana Hebbala; Nele-Asha Kirana Kendra, RT Nagar; 4.30 pm.

CULTURAL

Book Launch: 'Belwell': Release of the book by Vikram B K; guests include B Manjamma Jogathi, V Gopal, and Girish Rao Hatwar (Jogi); Nani Angala, Suchitra Cinema Academy, Banashankari; 10 am.

Literary Tribute: 'Unforgettable Greats' (Series 3): Tributes to G S Shivarudrappa, K S Nisar Ahmed, and M Gopalakrishna Adiga; guests include Y K Muddukrishna and B R Lakshmana Rao; Karnataka Sugama Sangeetha Parishat; Kahale Bande, Bugle Rock Road, Basavanagudi; 10.30 am.

33rd Sriramanavami Music Festival: Keyboard performance by Arjun Sambasivan R; Vocal performance by Sikkil Gurucharan accompanied by Charulatha Ramanujam (Violin) and Giridhar Udupa (Ghatam); Sreevani Kala Kendra, Basaveshwaranagar; 4.15 pm.

Hasiru Siri Cultural Festival: Inauguration by Nischalanandanatha Swamiji; Award presentation by S G Siddaramaiah; featuring song and dance performances; Hasiru Bhoomi Cultural Trust; Nayana Auditorium, Kannada Bhavana, JC Road; 4.30 pm.

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◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

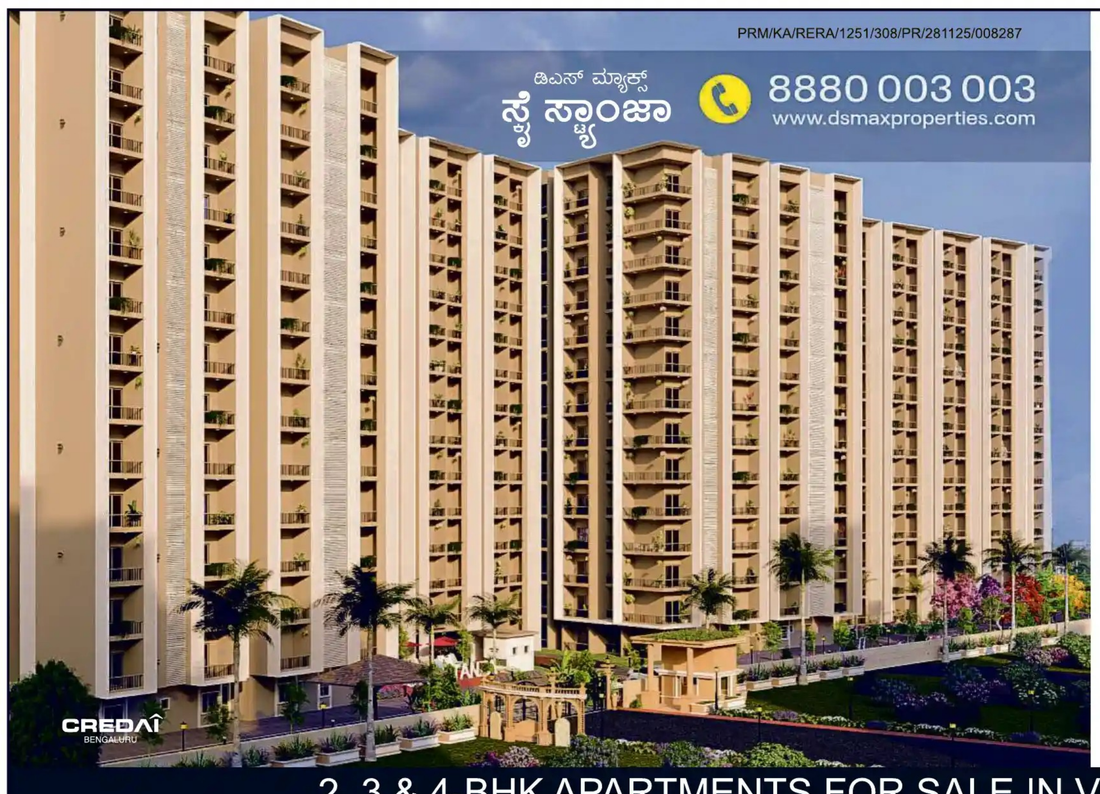
FORECAST

Partly cloudy sky

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	34.6°C
Minimum	23.2°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	26%
Sunset (March 29)	6:31 pm
Sunrise (March 30)	6:19 am
Moonrise	2:33 pm
Moonset	2:48 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD



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Indira Gandhi institute of child health gets 450-bed new building

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state-run Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH) on Saturday got a new 450-bedded building on its existing premises in Siddapura.

The eight-storey building cost Rs 135 crore to construct and aims to improve cancer care. It will also house 50 neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) and assist with organ transplantations.

The institution currently operates 450 beds, annually treating approximately 1.78 lakh outpatients and 21,000 inpatients, while performing around 5,000 surgeries.

Dr Sharanprakash Patil, Minister for Medical Education and Skill Development, said, "Nimhans-like institutes and endocrinology centres will be established in Mysuru and Kalaburagi, on the lines of Jayadeva hospital. A dedicated children's hospital, modelled after Indira Gandhi children's hospital, will be built in Kalaburagi at a cost of Rs 100 crore". He urged the public to use the new facilities.

GSI sets up expert panel to study tunnel impact on Lalbagh

MP Surya sought scientific assessment of project

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

In a significant development, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) has constituted a five-member expert committee to carry out a detailed geological and geotechnical appraisal of Lalbagh Botanical Garden, following state government's plan to build a six-lane tunnel road beneath the geoheritage site.

The committee has been tasked with conducting field inspections and assessing the potential impact of tunnelling on the Peninsular Gneissic Complex, a notified geoheritage formation within Lalbagh. It has been directed to submit its report within three weeks to the Additional Director General and Head of Department (Southern Region).

The panel will be led by senior GSI official K V Maruthi and includes experts from Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad with specialisation in engineering geology and related fields.

The formation of the committee follows concerns raised by Bangalore South MP, L S Tejasvi Surya, who had written to the GSI in October 2025 seeking a scientific assessment of the tunnel project. In his letter, Surya warned that the proposed alignment could intersect the Lalbagh rock formation and flagged risks such as structural instability, rock fractures, and hydrological disruptions.

A view of the area at Lalbagh Botanical Garden, where the tunnel road project poses a potential threat to the 300-million-year-old rock formation and fragile ecosystem. DH PHOTO

Lalbagh, apart from being considered as a jewel of Bengaluru - is also geologically significant, hosting some of the oldest rock formations in the Indian subcontinent. The proposed tunnel project has drawn scrutiny from experts and citizens alike as it requires about six acres of land in temporary basis and one acre permanently.

Protest held

Earlier, BJP leaders including opposition leader R Ashoka and Jayanagar MLA CK Ramamurthy had staged a protest in Lalbagh, demanding the dropping of tunnel road which connects Northern part of Bengaluru (Hebbal) with South (Central Silk Board).

The project - estimated to cost about Rs 18,000 crore - is taken up under public-private partnership with the state government providing 40% of the cost along with rights to collect toll for 40 years and leasing of five acres of property in the prime areas. Currently, the project has received two bidders and technical evaluation of the bids is underway.

Shah slams Mamata in 'charge sheet': TMC hits backs

Amit Shah, from Page 3B

She hit out at the EC and the BJP in Raniganj even as Shah released the saffron party's 'charge-sheet' against the TMC government in the state in Kolkata.

Shah said infiltration from across India's border with Bangladesh through Assam had almost stopped since the BJP had come to power in the northeastern state.

"West Bengal is the only state through which infiltrators are still entering the country and creating disturbances across the nation. Infiltration through the areas near the India-Bangladesh border of the state is a matter concerning national security," he alleged, reiterating the BJP's allegation that the TMC were helping the illegal migrants settle in West Bengal and turning them into its vote bank, thus changing the demographic profile of the state.

"The elections in West Bengal are important not only for the state but for the security of the entire country. It is the appeasement and vote-bank politics of the TMC government which is now posing a threat to the security of the Siliguri Corridor (the narrow link in North Bengal between the northeastern region and the country's mainland)."

He accused the TMC government of delaying the transfer of land and stalling the works to erect fences along the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal.

The TMC, however, sought to turn the tables on the BJP-led government at the Centre.

"The BJP rules at the Centre. It rules 15 states and most border states through which infiltration is happening. Amit Shah himself is the Union Home Minister. So what exactly has he been waiting for?" senior TMC leader and West Bengal Education minister Bratya Basu said.

High security and 'red' fever take over as city hosts IPL opener

IPL, from Page 3B

"This time, the enthusiasm of RCB fans and cricket spectators is excellent, they are cooperating with us very well. There is a fundamental change this year. We are providing maximum gate openings from Cubbon Road. We have almost eliminated public entries from Queens Road, bringing them near to zero. Arrangements have been made so that the maximum number of people use Cubbon Road and Link Road to enter the stadium."

He added that compared to previous years, this year the police opened the gates four hours in advance. "At every gate, arrangements have been made for five to six people to enter at a time so that we can bring the crowd in from the footpaths within no time. This ensures there is no congestion on the footpaths."

The high-alert security remained in effect until well after the match concluded to ensure a peaceful exit for the thousands of fans.

Private schools flag unfair classification, exorbitant tariffs

Accuse BWSSB of charging hefty rates for schools under commercial category

BENGALURU, DHNS: The private schools have accused the BWSSB of charging exorbitant water bills, treating them as commercial establishments.

In its petition to Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, the Associated Management of Primary and Secondary schools in Karnataka stated, "We bring this appeal to your attention that an inconsistent fee regime is being imposed on private educational institutions by the BWSSB. This is causing immense financial pressure on the schools and is also indirectly affecting the parents and students," said the association.

The association further stated, "When the BWSSB reviewed the billing records and classification, it became clear that educational institutions were unfairly included in the commercial category, resulting in excessive and inconsistent fees being charged."

Commercial classification

According to the association, educational institutions that fall under the commercial classification are charged Rs 25,000 per month while those that fall under private schools/ training institutes pay Rs 2,500 per month.

"The classification is unfair and discriminatory because it creates the misconception that all CBSE/ICSE schools are commercial institutions that charge high fees," said D Shashi Kumar, general secretary of the association.

This type of classification violates the - Right to equality and Right to Education, he added.

Hidden charges

The association even pointed out that several hidden and unclear charges were included in the billing system.

"The drainage charges, GBA fees, commercial pro rata charges, surcharge based on usage, additional penalty once a month, penalty for not having OC for old buildings," explained Shashi Kumar.

The association urged Shivakumar to intervene and resolve the issue.

West, North & South corporations push to develop & maintain road, parks, lights

Budget, from Page 3B

They also hope to raise additional revenue by regularising up to 15% of deviations in building construction and plan approvals for single plots among other measures.

Total outlay of Rs 20,217 crore

Over the last two days, all five corporations presented maiden budgets with a total outlay of Rs 20,217 crore.

They share a part of the pie with Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) for handling waste and Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Ltd (B-SMILE) for undertaking large-ticket infrastructure projects.

What was common in all five budgets is the allocation of Rs 2.25 crore each for all 369 wards, a standard the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) followed in successive budgets.

These funds — close to Rs 1,000 crore — are generally spent on minor works such as de-silting drains and fixing footpath slabs and their execution is neither taken seriously nor documented well.

Notably, the five budgets have set aside close to Rs 290 crore for the discretionary use of the Bengaluru in-charge minister.

Finances not in good condition

More importantly, the finances of erstwhile BBMP were not in good condition before it was divided into five civic bodies.

Owing to lack of funds and over expenditure, there is a two-year delay in clearing bills, leading to fake billing.

KSRTC wins award for transparent recruitment initiative

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) said it had won the SKOCH National Award for its initiative on 'Transparent recruitment and training programme'.

The KSRTC said that through a technology-driven recruitment system, including automated driving tests, online examinations, digital verification of documents, web-casting and auto-generated scorecards, it recruited 2,000 drivers/conductors, 300 technical staff and 441 candidates under compassionate grounds. It also trained more than 12,000 employees over the last six months. The Delhi-based SKOCH Group, a think tank, presented the award to KSRTC Managing Director Akram Pasha in New Delhi on Saturday.

KSRTC MD Akram Pasha receives the award in New Delhi. PHOTO:KSRTC

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
VARIOUS ENGINEERING WORKS

Tender Notice No.: 10-20226-SrDENS, Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Central Railway, Solapur on Behalf of President of India, invites e-tender from the reputed firms/contractor for the following works. **Name of Work:** 1. Repairs to Balvikas School in Porter Chawl Colony at Solapur 2. Construction of kavach NMS and FAT setup room at 1st floor level above control office Solapur. 3. Renovation of rooms in existing service building on PF no 2 & 3 at Hotgi Station 4. Proposal for sports infrastructre including standard lawn tennis coutrs, squash courts & badminton hall Siddeshwar Railway Officers Club, Solapur, **Approximate Cost of the work.:** ₹4,10,92,425.53, **Earnest Money:** ₹8,21,900.00, **Completion period of the work.:** 12 Months, **Maintenance Period:** 24 Months, **Last Date & Time of uploading quoted tender on www.ireps.gov.in website:** 16.04.2026 up to 15:00 hrs, Date & Time of Opening of tender on **www.ireps.gov.in** : 16.04.2026 at 15:30 hrs. The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website frequently before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender. Website: **www.ireps.gov.in**

DRM (Works), Solapur

TRAVELING WITH DANGEROUS AND EXPLOSIVE GOODS IS A PUNISHABLE OFFENSE 10

SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE NO. 29/2026/SBC Date : 26.03.2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

SN	Tender No.	Description in brief (E-open Tender)	Qty.	Unit
1	L8265088	Supply, Installation and commissioning of Hydraulic Re-Railing Equipment (HRE) (COFMOW Compendium No. COFMOW/IR/REE/2022,Rev-0 Dt:01.06.2018 Sl.no.310)	1	Set

Last date for Submission of bids : **Upto 10.30 hrs on 27.04.2026**

For details log on : **www.ireps.gov.in**

Senior Divisional Material Maneger, Bengaluru

PUB/1030/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | @SWRAILWAYHQ | @sw_railways

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No.: SWR-SBC_IPS-MF-VRLA Dated : 24-03-2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work

Item of work	Approx. Value
South Western Railway Bengaluru Division- Provision/ Replacement of overaged IPS, MF earthing including modified LPD's (as per RDSO guidelines), overaged batteries with VRLA batteries over Bengaluru Division.	Rs. 5,48,32,093.05

Last date for submission of bids : **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 15-04-2026**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/Bengaluru

PUB/1019/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PAPER PUBLICATION

My client Sri Chaluvaraju S/o Late Ranagaswamy, Residing at Kunthanahalli Village, Athahalli Post, Bannur Hobil, T.Narasipura Taluk, Mysuru District - 571101 he is the following Schedule who become an actor willing to buy property from BK Puttaraju S/o Late N.K. Kote Rangaiah, aged, about 64 years, residing at No. 415/51. 1st Main, 2nd Cross, Marappa Extension, Rajarajeshwaraj Nagara, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru. If there is any dispute regarding the said property or any kind of mortgage, purchase, basis, omissions to someone else, if there is any objection, they can submit their objection or dispute in writing to the below lawyer's office within **7 days** of this publication. Please understand that if there is no delay, dispute, or objection, my client will purchase the below schedule property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY DETAILS

All that piece and parcel of the land property beating Survey **No. 133/3,** measuring **1 acre 21 guntes,** situated Mayagnahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli Ramanagara Taluk, Hounded on; **East;** Land bearing Sy. No. 131/1, **West:** Land bearing Sy. No. 132, **North:** Land bearing Sy. No.29, **South:** Bengaluru-Mysuru High Way Road.

Sd/- B.S. Channu BA, BED, LL.B.
Advocate, #47, Anugraha, 2nd Floor, 5th Cross, 3rd Main Road, Jayanagara, Mysuru City- 570014.
Mob No. 8453308937

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
VARIOUS ENGINEERING WORKS

Tender Notice No.: 09-2026-SrDENCo Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Central Railway, Solapur on Behalf of President of India, invites e-tender from the reputed firms/contractor for the following works. **Name of Work:** 1) Extension of shunting neck and converted into DN goods loop line at Tilati station. II) Provision of additional loop lines at BRB. iii) Conversion of loop line in common loop line where favorable crossover is available (1.SVG, 2.KUL, 3. DUD, 4. BOT, 5. MKPT, 6. AAG, 7. WKA, 8. BLNI, 9. JNTR & 10 BGVN) iv) Gharni-Creation of New Block station between Latur-Latur Road section. **Approximate Cost of the work:** ₹29,06,17,846.04 **Earnest Money:** ₹58,12,400.00 **Completion period of the work:** 18 Months **Maintenance Period:** 12 Months **Tender Notice No.:** 10-2026-SrDENCo **Name of Work:** 1) Improvement of Arch Bridges by extending barrel length and construction of Retaining wall, wing wall and ballast retainer on Bridge no 561/2 DN(span 3 x 5.60m), 577/1 DN(span 2 x 6.10m), 581/1 DN(span 2 x 6.10m) and 587/2 UP&DN(span 5 x 8.10m) in DUD-WD section of Solapur Division. (Re-invitation) 2) Rebuilding of 04 ORN-3 Bridges (536/1A, 589/2, 589/3DN SUR-WD section & 427/3 KWV-MRJ section) in Solapur Division.(Re-Invitation) **Approximate Cost of the work:** ₹20,07,47,848.46 **Earnest Money:** ₹40,15,000.00 **Completion period of the work:** 18 Months **Maintenance Period:** 48 Months Last date & line of uploading quoted lender on **www.ireps.gov.in** website: 09-2026-SrDENCo, 10-2026-SrDENCo-20.04.2026 upto 15.00 Hrs. Date & Time of Opening of tender on www.ireps.gov.in : 09-2026-SrDENCo, 10.2026-SrDENCO-20.04.2026 at 15:30 Hrs. The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website frequently before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corigenda issued for this tender. Website: **www.ireps.gov.in.**

DRM (Works), Solapur

TRAVELING WITH DANGEROUS AND EXPLOSIVE GOODS IS A PUNISHABLE OFFENSE 13

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public are hereby informed that my client has entered into an agreement for purchase of the Immovable Property described in the Schedule hereunder from its owners **SRI. S. KISHAN KUMAR,** Son of D. Shanthilal and **SMT. PANNA K,** Wife of Sri. S. Kishan Kumar, both are residing at No.E-401, Jarcnada Block, Brigade Millennium, J.P. Nagar, 7th Phase, Bengaluru-560078. Any person/s having any claim/rights/interest over the Schedule Property or any objections for said sale of the property, may file their objections in writing, along with supporting documents viz. Agreements, JDA, GPA, MOU & other contract agreements, addressed to the undersigned **within 7 days** from the date of publication of this Notice, failing which, it shall be construed that there are no claims of any sort over the said property and my client shall be advised to proceed with the purchase.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

ALL THAT Piece & Parcel of Immovable Commercial Property bearing **E Asthi No.8197211802, BBMP Khata No.153/152/161/93/1, 2,** Property No.93/1 (converted land bearing Sy.93/1, House List No.93/1) and No.93/2 (converted land bearing Sy.93/2, House List No.93/2), situated at **SINGASANDRA VILLAGE, BEGUR HOBLI, HONGASANDRA GRAMA PANCHAYATH, Bengaluru South Taluk, Bengaluru,** now comes under the purview of BBMP Ward No.191-Singasandra, measuring **EAST to WEST 187.9 + 163.9/2 FEET and NORTH to SOUTH 99.75 + 103.75 / 2 FEET, in all totally measuring 17,226 square feet,** including passage, parking area and setbacks and comprises of commercial building consisting Ground Floor 10,000 square feet built up area, First Floor 10,000 square feet built up area, Second Floor 10,000 square feet built up area and Third Floor 10,000 square feet built up area and bounded on the:

East by : Vacant Land;
West by : Road,
North by : Property of Purushotham Reddy,
South by : Vacant Land.

Mr. K.B. THIPPE SWAMY, Advocate No.22, L.S No.25, First Floor, SSB Mattada Complex, Tank Bund Road, Bengaluru-560 009.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work

Publication of E-Tender Notice No.: B-TRD-29-2025-26-OT-47 Dated : 24-03-2026

Item of work	Approx. Value
Provision of various OHE/PSI caution boards and Sectioning Diagrams over Bengaluru.	Rs. 72,10,395.49

Publication of E-Tender Notice No.: B-TRD-29-2025-26-OT-48 Dated : 24-03-2026

Item of work	Approx. Value
Lighting arrangement for tower cars of Bengaluru Division.	Rs. 10,27,675.66

Last date for submission of bids for above **Tender is:Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 16-04-2026**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer / TRD Bengaluru

PUB/1020/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
VARIOUS ENGINEERING WORKS

Tender Notice No.: 11-20226-SrDENS, Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Central Railway, Solapur on Behalf of President of India, invites e-tender from the reputed firms / contractor for the following works. **Name of Work:** 1. (A) Replacement of pipe line of Kunnor pump house 300mm dia11-20226-SrDENSof length 9000M at Wadi under ADEN/KLBG sub division. (B) [i] Replacement of pipe line Bablad pump house to KLBG filter plant 200mm dia of length 4500M ADEN/KLBG sub division. [ii] Replacement of pipe line from Shahabad pump house toShahabad filter plant 200mm dia of length 3650M ADEN/KLBG subdivision 2. Construction of store, dormitory & garden development at railway hospital Solapur, **Approximate Cost of the work.:** ₹9,11,22,469.86, **Earnest Money:** ₹18,22,500.00, **Completion period of the work.:** 12 Months, **Maintenance Period:** 24 Months, **Last date & Time of uploading quoted tender on www.ireps.oov.in website.:** 20.04.2026 up to 15:00 hrs, Date & Time of Opening of tender on **www.ireps.gov.in** 20.04.2026 at 15:30 hrs. The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website frequently before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender. Website: **www.ireps.gov.in.**

DRM (Works), Solapur

TRAVELING WITH DANGEROUS AND EXPLOSIVE GOODS IS A PUNISHABLE OFFENSE 11

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client ('**Client**') is desirous of entering into a sale transaction in connection with the immovable properties measuring 8.31 Acres, morefully described in the '**Schedule**' hereunder and hereinafter collectively referred to as the '**Schedule Properties**' with **K.S. Subbiah Pillai & Co. (India) Private Limited**, having its registered office at New No.3 (Old No.2), First Floor, Rajabather Street, T. Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India - 600 017 ('**Owner**'). The Owner has represented to our Client that it is the absolute owner of the Schedule Properties, with unrestricted rights of alienation over the same.

Notice is hereby given to the general public that any person/s other than the Owner, asserting any right, title, charge, lien, claim/s or any interest whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Properties is/ are hereby called upon to submit to the undersigned, their claim/s, if any, over the Schedule Properties or their objections, if any, to the transaction. The said claim/s or objections must be in writing, together with documentary proof of such claim/s or objections, so as to reach us at the address given below within a period of **10 (ten) days** from the date of publication of this Notice. If no such claim/s or objections are received within the said period of 10 (ten) days, it shall be deemed that no one else other than the Owner has/ have any right, title, charge, lien, claim/s or any interest whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Properties. Further any claims or alleged interests, if any, which are not received within the said period of 10 (ten) days shall be deemed to have been consciously waived and disregarded for all intents and purposes and shall thereafter not be binding on our Client and our Client would be at liberty to proceed with the sale transaction in connection with the Schedule Properties.

SCHEDULE
(Description of the Schedule Properties)

Sl. No.	Description	Sale Deed & Conversion details
1.	All that piece and parcel of immovable property being a portion of property bearing **Survey No. 48/3,** measuring 7 Acres 38.90 Guntas (from and out of 9 Acres 29.25 Guntas)situated at **Hongasandra Village**, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore Urban District and bounded on the: East by : Kudlu village boundary; West by : Bangalore-Hosur Road and remaining portion of Survey No. 48/3; North by : Property bearing Survey No. 48/4C; and South by : Property bearing Survey No. 48/2.	**K.S. Subbiah Pillai & Co. (India) Private Limited** had purchased the property under a Sale Deed dated 03.07.1969 (Registered as Document No. 1700/1969-70) from Mr. Venkatarama Setty & others. The property has been converted for commercial purposes under an Official Memorandum dated 26.11.2012 bearing No. ALN[SB][B.H]SR.72/2012-13 issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District.
2.	All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing **Survey No. 201/2**, measuring 13.50 Guntas, situated at **Kudlu Village,** Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk and Bangalore Urban District and bounded on the: East by : Remaining portion of property bearing Survey No. 201/2; West by : Hongasandra Village boundary and property bearing Survey No. 48/3 of Hongasandra; North by : Remaining portion of property bearing Survey No. 201/2; and South by : Remaining portion of property bearing Survey No. 201/2.	**K.S. Subbiah Pillai & Co. (India) Private Limited** had purchased the property under a Sale Deed dated 25.07.2012 (Registered as Document No. 2416/2012-13) from Mr. Sanka Rama Rao. The property has been converted for industrial purpose under an Official Memorandum dated 17.07.2012 bearing No. ALN[A][S.H]SR:105/2012-13 issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District.

Date: 29.03.2026
Place: Bengaluru

Ms. Brijita Prakash, Partner
J. Sagar Associates
Advocates & Solicitors
18th Floor, SKAV 909, No. 9/1, Residency Road, Richmond Circle
Bengaluru – 560 025.
Ph. 080-4350 3600/080-4350 3676, Email – brijita.prakash@jsalaw.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public are hereby informed that my client has entered into an agreement for purchase of the Immovable Property described in the Schedule hereunder from its owner **M/S. PAL INTERNATIONAL REALTORS & TRADERS (P) LTD.,** a Private Limited Company duly incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013, having its registered office at Udupi Krishna Bhavan, No.91, Jyothi Nivas College Road, 5th Block, Koramangala Industrial Layout, Bengaluru-560095, represented by its Directors, **1. MR. V.S. SRIKANTH & 2. MRS. SHYLAJA SRIKANTH,** duly authorized vide Board Resolution passed in the meeting of Board of Directors of the company held on 23.03.2026. Any person/s having any claim/rights/interest over the Schedule Property or any objections for said sale of the property, may file their objections in writing, along with supporting documents viz. Agreements, JDA, GPA, MOU & other contract agreements, addressed to the undersigned **within 7 days** from the date of publication of this Notice, failing which, it shall be construed that there are no claims of any sort over the said property and my client shall be advised to proceed with the purchase.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

ALL THAT Piece & Parcel of Commercial Property bearing **E PID No.8310441521, Property bearing No.55, Property Old No.301/295/10,** Assessment No.2119/301/295/10, duly converted from agricultural to non-agricultural industrial purpose vide Conversion order bearing No.B.Dis.ALN.SR146/1979-80, dated 24.05.1980, order passed by the Thasildhar, Anekal Taluk, situated at **Bommasandra Village, Attibele Hobli, Anekal Taluk,** Bengaluru, measuring an extent of 10 Guntas **(10890 square feet),** comprises of building consisting Basement Floor, constructed area 6714 square feet, Ground Floor, constructed area 6714 square feet, First Floor, constructed area 6714 square feet and Second Floor, constructed area 6714 square feet, totally built up area 26856 square feet, now the area comes under the purview of Town Municipality, Bommasandra Ward No.3 and bounded on the:

East by : Property belonging to Saraswathi Ammal
West by : Bengaluru Hosur Road;
North by : Property being portion of Sy.No.55 belongs to Sreenivasa Reddy
South by : Property belongs to Rama Murthy.

Mr. K.B. THIPPE SWAMY, Advocate No.22, L.S No.25, First Floor, SSB Mattada Complex, Tank Bund Road, Bengaluru-560 009.

SHREE SOMESHWAR FARMER'S CO-OP SPINNING MILL LTD., LAXMESHWAR-582116 GADAG DIST, KARNATAKA.

Reg.No.JRBG:7612/80-81. Phone.0847295199
Email.someshwarmill@yahoo.com. Chairman:94480-88551
Secretary: 94487-83508. I/c.,M.D: 94488-59948

Ref No. SFCSML/PUBLIC AUCTION/32/2025-26. Date: 26.03.2026.

PUBLIC AUCTION SALE-NOTIFICATION

UNDER PERMISION FROM, THE TEXTILE COMMISSIONER AND DIRECTOR OF HANDLOOMS AND TEXTILES, BANGALORE (KARNATAKA) **Dt: 03.02.2026,** Mill hereby inviting PUBLIC AUCTION SALE of 25000 spindle capacity spinning mill's scraps/Old machinery **"AS IS WHERE IS"** basis on:**18.04.2026, at.12AM** interested person/s & firms becoming a nominal membership of the Mill, may visit/inspect the scraps/Old machinery Prior to the auction **date: 18.04.2026,** from **02.04.2026** to **17.04.2026** between **11AM- 4PM.** (Excluding Govt Holidays) with prior appointment.

The authority reserve the right to accept or reject any or all the Public Auction Sale at any time without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

Sd/- (H.B. Patil)
I/c. Managing Director.
Shri Someshwar Farmers Co-op. Spinning Mills Ltd., Laxmeshwar

Sd/- (P.G. Upanal)
Chairman,
Shri Someshwar Farmers Co-op. Spinning Mills Ltd., Laxmeshwar

ANUSANDHAN NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION
(Established as an Apex Body under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India)
(File No.ANRF/Rcctt./01/2026)

ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE No.01/2026

The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) invites applications for filling up of the following posts as per the details given below:

Sl No	Name of the Post	Pay Scale	No. of Posts	Mode of Recruitment
1	Scientist-H	Level-15 in Pay Matrix (Rs. 182200-224100)	01	Any of the following method(s): (i) Direct Recruitment, (ii) By Deputation, including short-term contract, (iii) Contractual appointment through open market.
2	Chief Operating Officer	Level-15 in Pay Matrix (Rs. 182200-224100)	01	(i) Deputation including short-term contract or (ii) Contractual appointment through open market.
3	Chief Financial Officer	Level-14 in Pay Matrix (Rs. 144200-218200)	01	Deputation including short-term contract.

- Last date of submission of online application would be 37 (thirty seven) days from the date of publication of Advertisement in the "Employment News/Rozgar Samachar".
- **The detailed advertisement** containing other details like Eligibility criteria, Age, Educational Qualifications, Experience, Selection process, Terms & Conditions of the recruitment, etc. is available on our Websites : **https://serb.gov.in/** and **https://dst.gov.in/**
- The candidates/aspirants needs to submit the applications through online mode only on the following portal-**https://recruitment.anrf.gov.in** using valid email id.

CBC 36130/11/0012/2526 **Director**

Draft law proposes 15-year land ownership for private schools

One-time opportunity to shift from dilapidated buildings

BENGALURU, DHNS

It will soon be mandatory for private organisations keen on establishing new schools in Karnataka to either own the parcel of land where the school is to be built or possess a registered lease deed for the past 15 years.

The draft of the Karnataka Educational Institutions (Classification, Regulation and Curriculum) Rules, 2026, which was recently published stipulates this condition.

The new draft makes it compulsory for private organisations to submit RTC, e-khata or khata document to prove their ownership of the land where they propose to build the school. The land must be large enough to accommodate the school building and playground, besides getting the nod from the competent authorities.

Stakeholders or the public have been given a 15 days to submit their objections to the draft regulations.

The government has also published amendments to the Karnataka Educational Institutions (Change of Governing Body or Change of Location of Private Educational Institutions) (Amendment) Rules, 2026.

The new draft makes it compulsory for private organisations to submit RTC, e-khata or khata document to prove their ownership of the land where they propose to build the school.
DH FILE PHOTO FOR REPRESENTATION

Relocation fee

The fee for relocation, according to the new rules, for a primary school will be Rs 50,000, it will be Rs 75,000 for a high-school and Rs one lakh for a pre-university college.

Fee for changes to the governing body of a primary school is Rs one lakh; it is Rs 1.5 lakh for high school and Rs 2 lakh for a PU college.

Private schools in urban pockets of the state operating in dilapidated buildings or small sites will be provided one chance to relocate the premises within the same city either by renting or leasing a new space.

But the new space must meet the prescribed criteria for infrastructure and land as stipulated in the new set of rules.

Meanwhile, in a bid to make the process for according recognition to schools a transparent affair, the Department of School Education and Literacy has decided to amend the Karnataka Educational Institutions (Recognition of Primary and High Schools) Rules, 1999, and a draft notification has already been issued.

The new draft rules stipulate that each application must be accompanied by a security deposit in the form of an e-bank guarantee from nationalised banks in the name of the concerned Deputy Director of School Education.

The governing bodies of the school are at liberty to use the interest accrued on the deposit towards improving the institution.

On the other hand, in the event of the school's closure or in the case of the governing body being found guilty of dereliction of duty, the department is authorised to use the money to disburse pending salary to the institution's staff.

The rules, will, however, come into force only once they are notified in the gazette.

Warm nights on the rise in Karnataka: Report

'93% of districts in state are in very high, high heat risk categories'

PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS

Karnataka is witnessing at least nine to 13 additional warm nights compared to three decades ago. This is not only affecting people's productivity but also causing serious health issues.

According to a report—How Extreme Heat is Impacting India: Assessing District-level Heat Risk—by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), at least 35 factors, including increased humidity, depletion of green cover, heat waves, and the formation of urban heat islands, are increasing night temperatures.

The report says that 93% of Karnataka's districts are in the very high and high heat risk categories. Coastal districts and three of the Malnad districts are in the very high risk category.

Vishwas Chitale, Fellow at CEEW, said: "The rise in very warm nights is most evident in densely populated districts. Over the last decade, Bengaluru has witnessed 11 additional warm night days. Similarly, Mysuru, Mangaluru, Shivamogga, and Hubballi-Dharwad, which are witnessing urbanization, experienced warmer nights. This trend is largely driven by the urban heat island effect, where heat absorbed during the day is released at night, keeping cities warmer."

Between 1981 and 2022, heat extremes in India have increased linearly, contributing to major heatwaves in 2013, 2016, 2019, 2022, and 2024, the report notes.

In the last decade, very warm nights have increased faster than very hot days. Nearly 70% of India's districts experienced five or more additional very warm nights per summer (March to June), while only around 28% saw a similar increase in very hot days.

"Warmer nights are particularly concerning as they make it harder for the body to cool down and recover from daytime heat. This increases the risk of heat exhaustion, heatstroke, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, and renal disorders," he added.

Chitale said that extreme heat now poses a risk to 57% of Indian districts—home to 76% of the population.

In Karnataka, several districts—including Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Uttara Kannada, Vijayapura, Belagavi, Bidar, Kalaburagi, Mysuru, Bagalkot, and Shivamogga—fall under the very high-risk category, while Bengaluru Rural and Chikkaballapura are among those in the moderate-risk category.

The report says there is also a 3% to 4% increase in relative humidity across the State which makes people feel more sultry and exhausted, even though the temperature might have risen just one to three degrees Celsius above normal.

N Puviarasan, head of the Bengaluru Meteorological Centre, said that the India Meteorological Department (IMD) currently records maximum and minimum temperatures. "We are not separately analysing long-term trends in night-time temperatures. Such conclusions require detailed comparative studies over time," he said.

He added that urbanisation and depletion of green cover were major contributors to the formation of local heat islands and need urgent attention.

HC hikes compensation to family of worker killed in Kodagu accident 11 years ago

BENGALURU, DHNS: The High Court of Karnataka has enhanced compensation to the family members of a daily wage worker killed in a road accident in Kodagu about 11 years ago.

Nanjundaswamy was walking by the roadside when a jeep knocked him down around 7.30 pm on May 30, 2015. Grievously injured, he was admitted to the Kushalnagar government hospital before being shifted to JSS Hospital in Mysuru.

He was treated there as an in-patient and discharged. Despite a follow-up treatment, he succumbed to the injuries at Kushalnagar hospital on June 12, 2015.

Nanjundaswamy's parents filed a claim petition, seeking a compensation of Rs 15.80 lakh.

On September 21, 2017, the tribunal at Madikeri awarded Rs 9.4 lakh compensation with 9% interest. Both the claimants and the insurance company challenged the order before the high court.

The insurance company claimed that the insured vehicle was not involved in the accident and that the deduction was wrongly taken as one third by the tribunal when the deceased was bachelor and was survived only by his parents. The company also contended that the interest awarded at 9% per annum was too high. On the other hand, the claimants challenged the non-grant of future prospects and sought a higher compensation.

Justice Tara Vitasta Ganju noted that the registration number of the vehicle involved in the accident was mentioned in the charge sheet and that the insurer never raised the contention of any fraud being played. Insofar as the contention about the future prospects is concerned, the court noted that the Supreme Court has spelt out the compensation under future prospects payable even in cases where the deceased was not employed.

The court allowed the appeal filed by the claimants and dismissed the appeal filed by the insurer. It ordered that the family members of the deceased are entitled to a total compensation of Rs 11,98,943 along with interest at the rate of 6% per annum.

Catholic Sangha stages protest demanding local bishops for Karnataka churches

BENGALURU, DHNS:

The Akhila Karnataka Catholic Christian Kannada Sangha on Saturday demanded that the church hierarchy mandate Kannada proficiency for bishops appointed in the state.

Leading a large demonstration at Freedom Park, writer and former Rajya Sabha member L Hanumanthaiah asserted that religious heads coming from other states must undergo at least six months of functional Kannada training before assuming office.

Addressing the gathering, Hanumanthaiah emphasised that the bond between the deity and the devotee should not be hindered by a linguistic barrier. "There should be no division between the language of God and the language of the people. It is a fundamental truth in any religion that the dialogue between the creator and the seeker must happen in a language understood by both," he noted.

The members of All Karnataka Catholic Christians Kannada Sangha stage a protest mandating Kannada proficiency for bishops appointed in the state, in Bengaluru on Saturday.
DH PHOTO/KISHOR KUMAR BOLAR

Hanumanthaiah clarified that the movement is not about challenging global church structures but about local representation. "We are not asking for Kannadigas to be appointed as bishops in Vatican City. We are demanding that those leading the churches in Bengaluru and across Karnataka be localites. Even the Supreme Court cannot oppose this demand," he added.

Recalling the contributions of Christian missionaries to the Kannada language, Hanumanthaiah cited Reverend Ferdinand Kittel, who authored the first major Kannada-English dictionary. He questioned why the current church leadership is struggling to understand the importance of the local tongue when their predecessors pioneered education in regional languages.

A Isaac, president of the Sangha, cited the guidelines of the Second Vatican Council, which advocate for the use of the vernacular (regional language) in liturgy. The protesters warned of intensified agitations if the church administration continues to overlook the local language and leadership.

Wishlist

- Regularisation of Kannada as the primary language for Mass and prayers in all Karnataka churches.
- Establishment of a regional seminary (Gurumatha).
- Exclusive administrative control of St Peter's Pontifical Seminary by Karnataka-based bishops.

Govt's decision to roll out grading system for 3rd language draws flak

Why did govt do this when SSLC exams were under way, asks Suresh Kumar

BENGALURU, DHNS

The state government's decision to use the grading system for evaluating students' performance in the third language has been criticised by stakeholders in the education sector, with many private schools questioning the rationale behind the move. In fact, the policy will come into effect immediately, including for the ongoing SSLC examinations.

Former education minister S Suresh Kumar was particularly critical of the timing of the government's announcement. "Given that the SSLC examination for the third language was only three days away, announcing such a decision amounts to a betrayal of students' interests," said the former minister.

Reminding the state government that conducting examinations was not to be treated as 'child's play', he added, "It would have made sense had this been announced in January or February. It is an anti-student and irresponsible move."

In a letter to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, the Associated Management for Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka wrote that the sudden decision had caused great confusion in the education sector.

"A third language is not just a subject. It's an important tool for developing multilingual competence, besides enabling intellectual development and instilling a sense of national integration among students. But hasty decisions taken without considering the importance of this issue, without any prior consultation have given rise to frustration and anxiety among millions of students and teachers," the letter read.

Such abrupt decisions called into question the government's commitment to quality of education and national alignment, added the association. The letter further pointed out that the decision also impacted the Kannada language, which is taught as a third language. Such decisions are likely to erode parents' faith in the state board's curriculum, prompting many, particularly those not from Karnataka, to enrol their students in schools affiliated to other boards, argued the letter, while underscoring the threat that several Kannada-medium and state board-affiliated schools were already facing.

LONG WAIT

People wait in a queue for collecting drinking water at Nazeer Nagar in Harapanahalli taluk of Vijayanagara district on Saturday. DH PHOTO

Annual day at Kristu Jayanti varsity

BENGALURU, DHNS: Kristu Jayanti (Deemed to be University) celebrated Samyagdarshan 2026, its annual day. Dr Jaspal Singh Sandhu, advisor to the Governor of Punjab and Vice-Chancellor of Lovely Professional University, was the chief guest. In his address, he emphasised the rapidly changing nature of the global workforce and the need for continuous learning.

"In today's world, the shelf life of skills, especially in fields like information technology, may be as short as four or five years. The future belongs to those who can learn, unlearn and relearn," he said.

6-year-old abducted, strangled

BENGALURU, DHNS: A six-year-old girl was allegedly strangled and her body was dumped in a eucalyptus grove in Electronics City.

Police suspect the role of someone known to the family behind the crime.

The victim was the daughter of migrant workers from Assam. The family lives in a warehouse at Electronics City. The father is a housekeeper, police said.

The girl went missing on Thursday evening. Her family searched for her but could not trace her.

On Friday afternoon, her father filed a missing persons complaint. Later that night, police received information from a citizen about a body lying in the eucalyptus grove. The family later positively identified the body. The murder may have been driven by enmity, police said.

Karnataka home to 274 springs, says first-of-its-kind survey

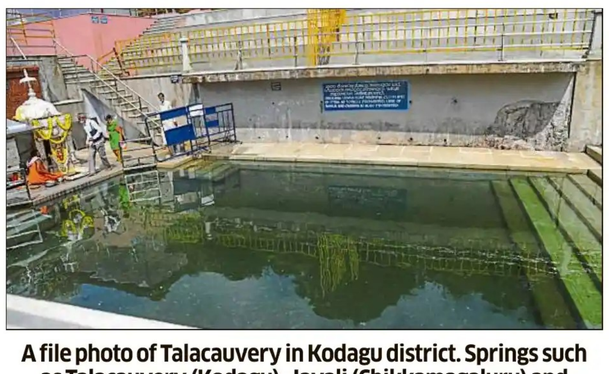
PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS:

Karnataka is home to 274 springs out of which 144 are perennial, 114 seasonal and 16 have dried up.

In a first of its kind census, as part of a Union government initiative, Karnataka Minor Irrigation and Groundwater Development Department and Groundwater Directorate has found that Belagavi has the highest number of natural springs at 59, followed by Uttara Kannada (31), Chamarajanagar (23) and Kodagu (23). Dharwad, Ramanagar, Bengaluru Rural, Davangere and Kolar have one spring each. This data is for the year 2023-24.

Bendru Teertha in Dakshina Kannada district is the only hot spring in the state and this is formed due to the unique hydrological feature.

Springs such as Talacauvery (Kodagu), Javali (Chikkamagaluru) and Ambutheertha (Shivamogga) form the origin of major rivers like Cauvery, Hemavathi and Sharavathi.



A file photo of Talacauvery in Kodagu district. Springs such as Talacauvery (Kodagu), Javali (Chikkamagaluru) and Ambutheertha (Shivamogga) form the origin of major rivers like Cauvery, Hemavathi and Sharavathi, respectively.

The directorate defines springs as natural outlets where groundwater flows to the surface through openings in the earth's crust. "They typically occur when the water table intersects the ground surface or when groundwater is forced out through fractures, faults, or permeable rock layers," it says.

The Western Ghats and Malnad regions including districts like Kodagu, Chikkamagaluru, Uttara Kannada, Dakshina Kannada, Belagavi and Shivamogga are the primary hubs for spring formation due to high rainfall and favourable geological conditions.

Speaking to *DH*, K B Rajendra, Director, Groundwater Directorate said that enumerators over a nine-month survey visited almost all the springs in the state and digitally mapped them on a dedicated mobile app provided by the Union government. He says nearly 80% of the springs are in rural areas.

"Springs are vital for drinking water, irrigation and ecological support, especially in hilly and mountainous regions for biodiversity support; they maintain the flow of rivers and streams during dry seasons and are part of cultural heritage, as many major springs in Karnataka are located at holy pilgrimage sites, blending hydrological importance with cultural significance," he says.

He says that except for those with religious and historical connections, the majority of springs in Karnataka are open and unprotected.

Rajendra says this data now serves as a database for spring conservation, spring rejuvenation, groundwater management, and water resource planning in Karnataka.

Shivamogga-based NGO demands revocation of nod to Agumbe Ghat road widening project

BENGALURU, DHNS: Amid concerns over violation of rules and material suppression of facts in a proposal to widen a part of the national highway (NH169A) in the fragile forests of Agumbe Ghat, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has issued in-principle (stage-1) clearance to the project, prompting activists to demand revocation of the same.

Over the last two years, activists from Green Lives Shivamogga Trust have been pointing out several problems in the way the proposal was handled by the forest department, including the permission for tree-felling and widening given in the non-forest section of the road that has led to a fait-accompli situation.

Documents perused by *DH* show that after multiple representations, the Deputy Inspector General of Forest (Central) on January 29, 2026, wrote to the state government to inquire into the matter and take appropriate action.

However, in a letter dated March 10, the Ministry accorded stage-1 clearance to the project less than two months after ordering the inquiry. Interestingly, the letter states that the user-agency, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), has to obtain environmental clearance.

In a fresh petition to the Ministry, marked to the National Green Tribunal, Green Lives noted that this was in violation of the Supreme Court order. "In WP NO. 202/1995, the Supreme Court has unequivocally held that forest clearance must precede any non-forest activity so as to prevent fait accompli situations," it said, noting that the department's tree cutting permissions will also be ex facie illegal due to the lack of prior clearances.

Further, the NGO reiterated that the MoRTH has suppressed the fact a three-km stretch of the road was part of the Someshwara Wildlife Sanctuary eco-sensitive zone. "The site inspection report by DCF, Shivamogga division, has deliberately mischaracterised the nature of activity as 'resurfacing' instead of 'widening/strengthening' with the evident intent of evading regulatory scrutiny," it said.

It listed several other reasons to demand immediate revocation of the clearance and appropriate action in public interest.

Green Lives secretary Shravan C M said the project will increase human–animal conflict in the coming days within and around the eco-sensitive zone of the sanctuary. "Despite multiple complaints, prima facie, the Forest Department appears to be favouring National Highway development, and this project seems to be the next step towards the proposed Agumbe tunnel," he added.

CM to campaign in Bagalkot for byelection

BAGALKOT, DHNS: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is set to campaign in Balgakot for five days, seeking votes for Congress candidate Umesh Meti in the byelection.

He would be addressing four public meetings each on March 30 and 31.

The second round of campaigning would be held on April 3. Three public meetings will be held on April 3, and two public meetings on April 4.

"The CM will visit again on April 6. He will hold consultations with various social groups and hold a road show," informed Congress district unit president S G Nanjayyanmath.

A total of 2,59,797 citizens are eligible to exercise their votes in the byelection scheduled on April 9. As many as 322 polling stations have been set up, deputy commissioner Sangappa informed.

NOT WIRED TO PROTECT? Activists flag laxity in upgrading capacity, neglect of safety measures

Mishaps continue unabated as escoms trip on rising infra

VITTAL SHASTRI
KALABURAGI, DHNS

Rising population and infrastructure growth pose a tough challenge to electricity supply companies in preventing electrical mishaps.

In the last decade, more human deaths have occurred due to electrical mishaps under GESCOM and HESCOM limits, which cover 14 districts of North Karnataka.

In this region, 1,154 human deaths and thousands of injuries have been reported, out of the approximately 2,500 human fatalities in the state since 2021-22.

Fatalities have not declined even after GESCOM spent Rs 228 crore over the last decade to prevent accidents in the seven districts under its purview.

Thousands of animal deaths are also reported across all five electricity supply companies. A total of 265 human deaths were reported in Bengaluru in the last two years.

GESCOM officials maintained that several factors — old power lines, encroachments and failure of electrical linemen to take precautionary measures before start of monsoon and summer — are responsible for power mishaps.

The company's superintendent engineer Mumtaz A H said GESCOM was doing its best to prevent power tragedies despite staff shortage and population growth.

She said linemen face growing burden as urbanisation requires them to handle more areas.

The official said Kalyana Karnataka region has traditional overhead power lines, unlike underground lines in densely populated urban areas, commercial and high-tech industrial hubs of Bengaluru, where space for traditional overhead lines is either unavailable or restricted.

Mumtaz said the company is increasing the use of covered conductors and aerial bunched cables to improve system reliability, reduce technical and commercial (AT&C) losses and prevent electrical accidents.

This initiative involves replacing existing overhead HT/LT lines with covered conductors or underground cables, she said.

Officials said long overhead power lines in the region are a significant cause of electrical accidents, frequently leading to line snapping, which results in fatalities, serious burns and fire hazards.

High summer temperatures in the region severely impact overhead power infrastructure leading to insulator failure, excessive conductor sag, premature transformer failure or explosions and subsequent electrical accidents.

KILLER CURRENT

Deaths due to power mishaps in Gulbarga, Hubballi, Mangaluru and Chamundeshwari (Mysuru) electricity supply companies.

Year	GESCOM	HESCOM	MESCOM	CESC
2021-22	100	135	67	62
2022-23	99	118	67	72
2023-24	93	135	56	44
2024-25	78	162	66	65
2025-26	98	136	53	53
Total	468	686	309	296

"We need to analyse data on human and animal fatalities alongside population and infrastructure growth in the last decade. Encroachments are occurring near old power lines. We are in a state of under-drawal of power against the power crisis earlier. All these factors contribute to electrical accidents. We are following government policy regarding safety norms. The HT/LT line ratio has declined to 1.125, which reduced energy losses, improved voltage stability and decreased transformer failures," Mumtaz said.

HESCOM managing director Vyshali M L attributed most electrical accidents to the large network of irrigation systems in North Karnataka, particularly on farms, due to electrocution related to pumpsets and illegal connections.

Awareness programmes

"We are conducting awareness programmes about safety measures apart from undertaking reconductoring to upgrade power infrastructure. This includes replacing older, lower-capacity conductors with higher-capacity conductors by identifying hazardous zones like schools and colleges," she said.

Kalyana Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Sharanabasappa Pappa attributes electrical mishaps to GESCOM's negligence.

He said the increase in business establishments over the last few decades is driving a significant surge in power demand, leading to higher electricity consumption and increased requirements for upgraded or new connections.

"Despite substantial investments in safety measures, electric mishaps have not shown a significant, proportional decline. The excess load on transformers has increased due to rising power connections, resulting in electric short-circuits. Laxity by officials in upgrading capacity leads to frequent failures and power outages," he said.

Activists and safety experts have raised concerns over electrical accidents and flagged neglect of safety measures by escoms.

They claimed outdated infrastructure, breaching of safety protocols and inadequate resource allocation contribute to mishaps.

"Shabby work is undertaken without adhering to standards while constructing or expanding distribution network. Electrical accidents are a human rights issue. The Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission must take remedial measures based on safety audit by a third party or independent agency," Deepak Gala, president of Hyderabad-Karnataka environment awareness and protection organisation, said.

DH
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OBITUARY

PARUVANGADA POOVAIAH MADAPPA
(Age 86)
Former MD of Karnataka Antibiotics & Pharmaceuticals, Senior Advisor to Karle Group and many other leadership positions throughout the country.

Passed: 28-Mar-2026,
Funeral: 29-Mar-2026
(Hebbal Crematorium 2 PM)
Spouse: Aslesha Madappa (Thamane Maneyapanda)
Children: Krithika & Karan
Grandchildren: Deeya, Isha, Vish & Shiv.
Resident at Zenith Residences, Nagavara
Mob: 9972116009 / 9738078888

Bypoll: Muslims told to instrospect

BENGALURU, DHNS: Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy on Saturday advised Muslim voters in Davanagere South constituency to vote in the byelection after thorough introspection.

"Congress rebel candidate Sadiq Pailwan may have withdrawn his papers, but a torn cloth can only be patched, cannot become new piece of cloth," he said.

Conceding that not all Muslim voters would support BJP, he said, "I urge the community to reflect on what happened in the selection of Congress candidate and preserve its self-respect."

Ticket tussle exposes Cong 'sidestepping' Muslim candidates

Party says Muslim contestants risk polarisation

PRATHIMA NANDAKUMAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

Is the Muslim community being shortchanged by the ruling Congress in political representation? Ahead of the April 9 bypolls, a ticket tussle broke out in Davanagere South where, despite a sizeable Muslim population (around 75,000), the party favoured Samarth (27), grandson of the late incumbent Shamanur Shivashankarappa, over a minority candidate.

Sadiq Pailwan, a close aide of Shivashankarappa, raised the flag of revolt and filed his nomination amid cheers from community members. The rebellion, however, quickly fizzled out after legislators Rizwan Arshad and Saleem Ahmed rushed to Davangere to mediate — though Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan skipped the meeting. Pailwan later withdrew, announcing his exit from the contest in the presence of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar in Bengaluru.

The Congress leadership defended the move as an old "tradition" of fielding family members of deceased incumbents. But within the minority community, it is seen as reinforcing entrenched dynasties.

Afsar Kodlipet, an SDPI nominee, said, "The community is upset. Is it Davanagere or 'Shamanagere'? We live in a democracy, not a monarchy. How can one family have a minister, an MLA, an MP— and still lobby for another MLA ticket?"

Leaders admit the current rebellion is often about bargaining for money or positions. Still, the Davanagere episode could cast a shadow on the Congress' prospects in upcoming contests.

This is not an isolated case. The party has fielded non-Muslim candidates in constituencies such as Chikpete, Jayanagar, Hebbal, Hosapete, Bantwal and Bhatkal — often backing influential families seen as capable of containing dissent. In 2023, the Congress gave only 15 tickets to Muslims and won nine.

Raw deal alleged

Abdul Majeed, state president of SDPI, said, "Muslims comprise around 12–15% of Karnataka's population and a majority votes for Congress. Yet the community gets a raw deal. This bypoll was an ideal opportunity to field a Muslim candidate. Being in power, the party could have consolidated its AHINDA base to ensure victory."

"Is the party afraid of rebellion from powerful families, or overconfident that Muslim voters have no alternatives?" he sought to know.

The Congress' argument that Muslim candidates risk polarisation is not without exceptions. In the 2024 Shiggaon bypoll, Yasir Ahmed Khan Pathan defeated Bharat Bommai, son of former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai. "Shiggaon has a smaller Muslim population than Davanagere South, but Siddaramaiah and Satish Jarkiholi helped consolidate Ahinda votes," Majeed noted.

Similarly, in Ramanagara, H A Iqbal Hussain ended the Deve Gowda family's long dominance in 2023, backed by DK Shivakumar.

Social activist Muneer Katipalla said, "It is the failure of Muslim leadership. Just increasing number of MLAs is no solution. Where are assertive leaders after Aziz Sait or Jaffer Sharief? We now have leaders with money or muscle, or those tagging along with powerful leaders."

Katipalla also questioned the lack of focus on implementing the Sachar Committee recommendations, resurvey of waqf lands, minority schools, scholarships, and rising communal tensions and 'draconian' laws affecting the community.

RAIN FURY

Heavy wind and rains uprooted a coconut tree on the highway near Mudigere in Chikkamagaluru district on Saturday. Heavy rains, accompanied by thunder and lightning, also lashed several parts of Mysuru, Kodagu, Hassan and Dakshina Kannada districts. Three women farmers sustained severe burns in a lightning strike at a coffee estate in Sakleshpur taluk. DH PHOTO

Hit by conscience, BJP MLA Suresh Kumar declines IPL tickets

BENGALURU, DHNS

Conscience-stricken BJP lawmaker S Suresh Kumar on Saturday announced that he will not accept IPL tickets or passes after the government acted quickly to arrange premium access to elected representatives, the "VIP culture" he described as "dangerous".

"As per my conscience, I politely decline to accept any IPL match ticket or pass issued by the government or the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA). Therefore, please don't issue any ticket or pass in my name," Kumar stated in a letter to Speaker UT Khader.

Kumar was in the Assembly when his legislator colleagues demanded cricket match tickets and respect from KSCA.

"In a House where voices should have been raised in favour of people, it was tragic that 'VIP respect' was demanded for us, public servants," Kumar stated.

Kumar pointed out that people's problems do not find a solution for years on end. "But when it came to facilities and tickets for lawmakers, the government showed the enthusiasm of acting within 24 hours, which has shocked citizens, making them dislike elected representatives," he stated.

"It is dangerous that such a 'VIP culture' is being rewarded under a government that calls itself socialist," Kumar stated, in what was seen as a veiled jibe at Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Kumar recalled the 2025 stampede outside the Chinnaswamy stadium that killed 11 people. "Their cries are still ringing in my ears. Amidst that pain, by demanding IPL tickets, we have belittled ourselves in public view," he stated.

S SURESH KUMAR, BJP MLA

"In a House where voices should have been raised in favour of people, it was tragic that 'VIP respect' was demanded for us, public servants.

In a separate statement, Kumar said he wanted to oppose tickets to legislators. "But I was shocked to hear the Speaker echoing similar sentiments and hence restrained myself," he said. Kumar said he further expected Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to oppose the 'VIP culture'.

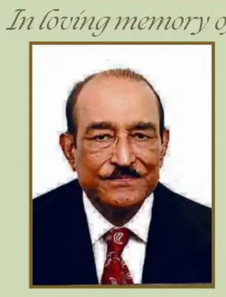
"...the same self-declared socialist CM was seen participating in the victory celebrations along with his grandchildren in front of Vidhana Soudha last year," Kumar said.

MBP defends his ilk

Industries Minister M B Patil defended lawmakers who sought cricket match tickets.

"It's alright...they'll ask for a couple of tickets. What's wrong with that? It's no big deal," Patil said. He said he had received two tickets. "But how can I go? I've got election duty."

In loving memory of



Cyril Vas

October 14, 1933 - March 23, 2026

With profound sadness we announce the passing of **Cyril Vas,** former bursar and teacher at Bishop Cotton Boys' School, Bangalore. Mr. Vas leaves behind a nearly five decade-long legacy of teaching, and is fondly remembered for his dedication and calm demeanor.
Funeral service will be held at **Indiranagar Methodist Church March 31st 2026 at 10am** followed by burial at 12:30pm at **Hosur Road Indian Christian Cemetery,** Gate No 3.
His passing is deeply mourned by his wife Bharathi, children Kiran, Arundathi & Sarvotham, Varun & Sarah, and grandchildren Amogh and Ohana.

BJP set to get organisational facelift

BENGALURU, DHNS: With an eye on the 2028 Assembly election, the Opposition BJP has decided to try a new organisational set-up that will be helmed by 'committed' party leaders groomed in the RSS ecosystem, sources said.

The state will be divided into 10 major zones, each one headed by one in-charge and a co-incharge. For Bengaluru, an additional co-incharge will be deployed.

This 'crack team' of 21 loyalists will be tasked with on-ground responsibilities, including constituency-wise and region-wise analyses, identification of issues, their root causes, resolving internal frictions and so on. To avoid bias, the in-charges and co-incharges will be deployed to constituencies other than their home turf.

Sources said that the team is being formed under the 'direct supervision and guidance' of senior leaders in New Delhi and the RSS.

This comes close on the heels of the RSS deciding to make Karnataka a new standalone unit.

At present, the provinces (prant) of Karnataka Uttar, Karnataka Dakshin, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are grouped under one kshetra. Karnataka will be divided into Bengaluru, Mysuru, Hubballi and Mangaluru.

The organisational rejig in the Karnataka BJP is a 'necessary surgery', sources said, given that the party's general secretaries in the state have not managed to revitalize the cadre after the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

BJP workers stage a protest holding brooms during Congress MLA Pradeep Eshwar's poll campaign in Davangere.

D'gere South: Cong, BJP workers in verbal duel

DAVANGERE, DHNS: Tension prevailed for a while after a verbal duel broke out between Congress and BJP workers during the campaign for Davangere South bypoll here on Saturday.

As Congress MLA Pradeep Eshwar went around in a procession. BJP workers, waiting near the party office, raised slogans against Eshwar when the latter arrived. Congress workers retaliated by raising slogans against BJP. The BJP workers showed slippers and broom sticks to the MLA. Then, Congress workers showered flowers on him. Later, police brought the situation under control.

In loving memory of

Late Smt. Usha R H

29th July 1941 – 29th March 2024

Co-founder & Former President,
Sri Vani Group of Institutions, Rajajinagar Bengaluru

You endured life's hardships with quiet strength, returned pain with love, chose kindness over bitterness and touched all with your gentle words and endless patience. This will always inspire us.

Deeply missed and fondly remembered by Family

Pvt bus seized for 'glorifying' Dawood Ibrahim

CHIKKAMAGALURU, PTI: Police on Saturday seized a private bus and registered a case against its driver and owner after it was found carrying messages allegedly glorifying fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim.

The incident came to light on March 26 when the vehicle, bearing a TN registration number, was travelling through Chikkamagaluru district with 48 students on board returning from a college trip, officials said.

According to the FIR, a police team from Basavanahalli station received a tip-off at around 3 pm that a vehicle was displaying slogans glorifying Dawood.

Officials said the inscriptions of Dawood, declared a terrorist by India, were displayed in a way that undermined the nation's sovereignty and integrity.

The students, from an engineering college in Coimbatore, were returning from a trip to Dandeli in Uttara Kannada district.

The bus was seized and taken to the station. An alternative vehicle was arranged for students.

The driver, who was detained and questioned, claimed he was only operating the vehicle, while the owner, based in Coimbatore, was asked to join the inquiry. Police are investigating the reason behind the inscriptions.

Police have registered a case on their own against the driver and owner under Sec 197(1) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (imputations prejudicial to national integration) and investigation is on, the officer added.

Married persons can't be in a live-in without obtaining divorce: HC

Says writ cannot be issued against statutory provisions

PRAYAGRAJ, PTI

The Allahabad High Court has observed that if a petitioner is already married and his/her spouse is alive, he/she cannot legally enter into a live-in relationship with a third person without obtaining a divorce from the earlier spouse.

A single-judge bench of Justice Vivek Kumar Singh said the court cannot issue any writ or direction for protection to the petitioners who are in a live-in relationship, without obtaining a decree of divorce from a competent court.

However, it said the petitioners might approach the SSP concerned if they were disturbed or subjected to any violence.

The authority concerned will verify it and do the needful in accordance with the law to secure the petitioners' lives, the bench said.

Justice Singh then disposed of the plea seeking a writ of mandamus directing the respondents not to interfere in their "peaceful life", besides protection..

THE CASE

- Petitioners had asked court to direct respondents not to interfere in their 'peaceful life'
- Both the petitioners were married to other persons, court was told
- Standing counsel argued that their living together was 'illegal' because they had not obtained divorce from their respective spouses

The counsel for the petitioners argued, "Both the petitioners are living together as husband and wife, and they have apprehension of life threat."

However, the standing counsel argued that both the petitioners were married separately, and their living together was "illegal" since they did not obtain a divorce from their respective spouses.

'Protection can't be granted'

The court said, "In such a situation, protection to the petitioners who claim to be in a live-in relationship cannot be granted in exercise of powers conferred under Article 226 of the Constitution."

In the order dated March 20, the court observed, "No one has the right to interfere in the personal liberty of two adults, not even their parents. But the right to freedom or the right to personal liberty is not absolute or unfettered; it is qualified by some restrictions as well.

"The freedom of one person ceases where the statutory right of another person starts. A spouse has the statutory right to enjoy the company of his or her counterpart, and he/she cannot be deprived of that right for the sake of personal liberty.

"No such protection can be granted to infringe the statutory right of the other spouse; hence, the freedom of one person cannot encroach or outweigh the legal right of another person."

The bench added, "It is well-settled law that a writ of mandamus can not be issued contrary to law or to defeat a statutory provision, including a penal provision. The petitioners do not have a legally protected and judicially enforceable subsisting right to ask for mandamus."

No impact of LPG shortage on REVA University hostels

When conversations across the city are dominated by the ongoing LPG shortage - delayed delivery, limited supply and improvised cooking - there is a quieter, reassuring story unfolding within the campus of REVA University.

Step into any of the REVA University hostels around mealtime and you will notice something striking - normalcy. The clatter of plates, the familiar aroma of freshly-prepared meals and students lining up - not with concern, but with appetite. At a time when many paying-guest (PG) accommodations in the city are struggling to keep kitchens running, often cutting down on the menu or switching to basic, repetitive meals, REVA's hostels have managed to stay steady and well-prepared.

A second-year engineering student shares how she expected disruptions when news of the LPG crisis first broke. "We thought meals might be reduced or delayed. But nothing changed. In fact, we had a full spread that evening - just like any other day." For many students living away from home, this consistency is more than convenience - it is comfort.

Behind this seamless experience lies careful planning and a strong institutional support system. The university ensured adequate cooking gas well in advance, anticipating fluctuations. Kitchen staff were briefed, back-up measures were put in place and supply chains were closely monitored. The result - uninterrupted service and no compromise on quality or variety.

Dr P Shyama Raju, Chancellor, REVA University, said, "At REVA, student well-being is non-negotiable. Even in challenging times like the current LPG shortage, our priority has been to ensure that every student feels secure and cared for. A nutritious meal, served on time, is a simple but powerful assurance that they are supported."

For hostel residents, especially those juggling academics, projects and campus life, this reliability has made a meaningful difference. A management student recalls calling his friend in a nearby PG, who mentioned surviving on packaged food due to irregular cooking. "It made me realise how much we take for granted here. We have proper meals, on time, every day."

In times of disruption, it is often the unseen systems that matter most. At REVA University, the ability to quietly sustain something as fundamental as daily meals reflects a deeper commitment to student well-being. Because sometimes, stability is not just about grand gestures - it is about ensuring that even in a crisis, life on campus continues, uninterrupted and nourishing.

Curated by DH Brandspot

Parl panel recommends highway safety patrol force

Proposal aims to tackle 4.73 lakh annual accidents

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Panel wants the force to be set up on a pilot basis on high-accident corridors and expressways. PTI FILE

A parliamentary standing committee has recommended that the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways set up a dedicated highway safety patrol force, on the lines of the Railway Protection Force, to bring better traffic discipline among motorists, reduce road accidents, and protect highway assets.

The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture, in its report, suggested that the Ministry examine the feasibility of establishing a dedicated National Highway Safety Patrol. The panel said the successful institutional model of the RPF has proved effective in ensuring asset protection and passenger safety.

The panel, in its report tabled in the ongoing Parliament session, noted that India recorded approximately 4.73 lakh road accidents and 1.70 lakh fatalities in 2024, according to data from the Transport Research Wing of the Ministry. National Highways alone accounted for over 52,600 fatalities during the year.

The committee, headed by JD(U) Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Kumar Jha, suggested that such a patrol be established, even if initially on a pilot basis, on high-accident corridors and expressways. This would help strengthen real-time accident response during the critical "golden hour", enhance enforcement of speed and lane discipline on access-controlled corridors, deter damage to highway assets, and complement the digital enforcement infrastructure being deployed under the Intelligent Traffic Management System.

Insisting that a dedicated institutional mechanism warrants serious consideration, the committee observed that the present dependence on state police forces, whose jurisdiction and priorities extend well beyond highway safety, is insufficient for the vast scale of the National Highway network.

Isro's interplanetary missions may face schedule hurdles, MPs warn

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI , DHNS

India's next set of interplanetary missions to the Moon and Venus in the next two years have been experiencing delays, because of which their "timely accomplishment" may become "challenging", a panel of lawmakers said in its latest report.

The MPs, briefed by Department of Space officials, raised concerns on how poorly the Indian Space Research Organisation spent the budgeted money for Chandrayaan-4, slated for an Oct 2027 launch, and Chandrayaan-5 and Venus Orbiter missions.

"The Committee is apprehensive that, if the pace of expenditure and project implementation continues at this level, the timely accomplishment of these missions as per the proposed timelines may become challenging," the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology said in its report tabled this week.

Chandrayaan-4 will be a lunar sample return mission and the world's first space probe making an attempt to bring back lunar soil from little-studied southern polar region.

The Rs 2,104 crore mission also aims to develop and prove critical new technologies including automated sampling and drilling, launching a vehicle from the moon and docking two spacecraft modules in lunar orbit.

An allocation of Rs 150 crore was made for the Chandrayaan-4 programme in the 2025-26 budget, but it was drastically cut to Rs 21 crore in the revised estimate presented to Parliament in December. The Isro has spent just Rs 34 crore by January 31.

When asked about this poor expenditure, officials told the MPs that the downward revision was "primarily due to delays in the finalisation of mission design and the availability of long-lead items required for hardware realisation."

These issues, they said, affected the planned schedule for procuring and producing certain mission components.

Also, procurement of electrical, electronic and electromechanical components and propulsion elements for the spacecraft, originally envisaged in 2025–26, has spilled over to the next fiscal.

Procurement of raw materials for the launch vehicle, planned last year, has been pushed to the current financial year due to a change in the launch vehicle configuration. Such deferred procurements led to underutilisation of funds, they said.

TG unveils breakfast scheme for kids

HYDERABAD, DHNS: Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy launched the "Toli Mudda" breakfast scheme for children below six years of age at Anganwadi centres on Saturday.

Launching the scheme, Revanth said that the government would address all pending issues of the Anganwadi staff.

BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Jayanagara Division, Office Building, 39th Cross Road, 18th Main Road, Jayanagara 4th 'T' Block, Bengaluru-560 041.

No. BSCC/JN/TEND/05/2025-26 Date: 27.03.2026

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

Sub: Regarding Corrigendum for Short Term Notice.

Ref: This Office Tender Notification No.EE/BSCC/JN/TEND/05/2025-26 Dated: 16.03.2026

With reference to the above subject and tender notification No.EE/BSCC/JN/TEND/05/2025-26 Dated: 16.03.2026, dates in the tender has been changed due to technical reasons and the revised dates are as per below and PSARA Certificates has been Exempted in Sl.No. 3 and 4 of the tender and there are no changes in the rest of the terms and conditions.

The Calendar of events is as below: (1) Last Date and Time for Receipt of Tenders on **02.04.2026 at 4:05 p.m. (2)** Date and Time of Opening Technical Bid on : **04.04.2026 at 4:05 p.m. (3)** Date and Time of Opening Financial bid on **06.04.2026 at 4:05 p.m.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Jayanagar Division, BSCC.

KARNATAKA FOREST DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED PULPWOOD WING, SHIMOGA.
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
O/o The Executive Director, KFDC Ltd., Near R.T.O Office, Shimoga

No.KFDC/ED/SHI/A6/CR-120/2025-26/862 Date: 25.03.2026

e-BID NOTIFICATION

The e-tender is invited through e-procurement from the wood based industries i.e. pulp and paper / rayon grade pulp, MDF board manufacturing industries / Suppliers/Any other pulpwood consuming industries etc. existing in Karnataka or elsewhere for purchase of Eucalyptus / Acacia / Casurina / Subabool pulpwood from the Divisions which is under the control of Executive Director, Karnataka Forest Development Corporation Ltd., Shimoga. Value of Tender is Rs 50.00 Crore.

1. E portal e-tender : e-procurement portal website https://kppp. karnataka.gov.in/ **2**. Date and time of receiving e-tender by e-procurement portal up to 17.30 hrs of 23.04.2026.

The other details required if any pertaining to the bid may be obtained from the e-procurement portal office phone No. 080-46010000, 080-68948777/above

office phone No. 08182-272155 during the office hours.

Sd/- Executive Director, Shimoga

DIPR/smg/ksmca/25-26/153/03/2101

Ensure fair voter process: Parl panel to EC

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Amid questions raised about the SIR of electoral rolls, a parliamentary panel has asked the Election Commission to ensure that a uniform process is applied to the exercise and that no voter is subjected to undue hardship during the process.

The recommendation by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice came in its report on the Demands for Grants (2026-27) of the Legislative Department under the Ministry of Law and Justice, tabled in Parliament recently.

The multi-party panel headed by BJP MP Brij Lal said the SIR should be carried out in a fair, transparent, and inclusive manner, ensuring that no genuine elector is excluded and that electors are not subjected to undue hardship during the revision process.

The panel emphasises the need for adequate safeguards for vulnerable sections, including senior citizens, persons with disabilities, economically weaker sections, and migrant populations. In its recommendation, the panel said the EC should put in place robust monitoring mechanisms at all levels to ensure uniform implementation of the revision process.

With the electoral rolls of 11 of 12 states and UTs that underwent SIR out, the total number of deletions has risen to 3.46 crore or 9.74% of 35.53 crore voters after the SIR on October 27, 2025. The final list of UP will be out only in April.

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT URBAN DEVELOPMENT CELL,
Tumakuru District, Tumakuru. E-Mail: ka.tumakuru.dudc@gmail.com

Tender Notification

The Project Director, DUDC, Tumakuru invites tenders through KPP Portal in Third Party Inspection details below

(In. Lakhs)

INDENT Number	Date&Time	Submission of tenders Last Date & time	Opening Technical Bid Date & Time
DMA/2025-26/SE7561	24.03.2026 to 08.04.2026 Time: 17:00 hrs	08.04.2026 till Time:17:00hrs	09.04.2026 Time:17:01 hrs

Bidders can obtain information of tenders through KPP portal at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Calendar of Events and other information are as follows Postponement of calendar of events and addendum (if any) will be notified only in KPP portal and not published in newspapers.

Sd/-Project Director,
District Urban Development Cell, DC Office, Tumakuru.

DIPR/TUM/RO-317/25-26/Oysters

Ladakh's tourism faces slump as peak season looms

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

Ladakh's tourism sector is facing uncertainty just weeks before its peak season, traditionally starting in late April or early May.

Industry stakeholders report that bookings are significantly lower this year amid multiple disruptions over the past year.

According to government data, domestic tourist arrivals in Leh fell from 292,836 in 2024 to 212,799 in 2025, a decline of around 27%, while Kargil saw arrivals drop from 320,432 to just 93,389, a fall of more than 70%.

Foreign visitor numbers also declined in both districts, reflecting weakened confidence among international travellers.

Although Ladakh itself remained peaceful, the terror attack in Pahalgam in April 2025, which killed 25 tourists, triggered travel advisories that mistakenly included Ladakh, prompting cancellations and hesitancy among visitors.

"After the Pahalgam attack, there was a lot of confusion in travel advisories, and that definitely impacted bookings for Ladakh," said Rigzin Wangmo Lachic, president of the All Ladakh Hotel and Guest House Association. "Many people think the entire region is unsafe."

The tourism sector's challenges were compounded in September 2025 when protests over statehood and constitutional safeguards turned violent in parts of Ladakh, resulting in at least four deaths.

Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, who was released earlier this month after serving about 170 days, has urged dialogue and reconciliation between Ladakhi leaders and the Union government.

However, the situation remains fragile. Strikes were observed across Ladakh just two days after Wangchuk's release, with the Leh Apex Body and the Kargil Democratic Alliance asserting that their agitation would continue.

"This pattern—of hopeful signals followed quickly by fresh strikes—adds to uncertainty for tourists," said Tsering Angchuk, a hotelier in Leh. "People planning trips are postponing or cancelling entirely."

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ENERGY SAVINGS GUIDE

MATTER OF MANDATE A small UT braces for a fiercely competitive triangular fight

Puducherry poll is battle of issues and anti-incumbency

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Congress candidate from Muthialpet constituency Malladi Krishna Rao during a rally for Puducherry Assembly elections. PTI FILE

Union Territory Puducherry's Assembly polls have always been intensely local and personality-driven, mainly due to its size — 30 seats and about 9.44 lakh voters.

The April 9 election is no different: It is a clash between the UT's two most popular politicians — N Rangasamy and V Vaithilingam — who lead the AINRC-BJP and Congress-DMK alliances, respectively. Actor-politician Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) is also in the race, making it a triangular contest.

However, the Congress has imperilled the hitherto cohesive alliance: Its candidates are taking on the DMK and the VCK in six seats, which could help the AINRC-BJP coalition. Winning margins are usually slender due to the small electorate, and constituencies are the size of bigger cities' corporation wards.

While the Congress has promised action against the rebels, it's futile because they remain in the fray. The Congress-DMK seat-sharing talks faltered, which led to confusion, with smaller allies like the VCK and the Left fielding their own candidates.

Vaithilingam, the lone Lok Sabha member from Puducherry, has complicated matters by challenging incumbent Chief Minister Rangaswamy in his traditional seat of Thattanchavadi, which the latter has won five times. Rangasamy is also contesting from a second seat: Mangalam.

Vaithilingam and Rangasamy have personal scores to settle: The former led a rebellion against the latter in 2008 and eventually replaced him as the CM. Three years later, Rangasamy quit the Congress to float the AINRC, decimating his former party, led by Vaithilingam.

Personal aura vs issues

The April 9 polls will decide whether the AINRC-BJP can bank on the outgoing government's welfare edge or the Congress-DMK alliance can capitalise on anti-incumbency. Or will the TVK from neighbouring Tamil Nadu spring a surprise? While the results hinge more on personal equations, local loyalties, micro-alliances, and caste factors, issues do matter. Money also plays a major role, like in TN.

Granting statehood to Puducherry — currently a UT, which means the elected CM has far fewer powers than the nominated Lieutenant-Governor — as well as neglect of people's needs in sub-regions such as Karaikal, Mahe, and Yanam, the Electricity Department's privatisation, and lack of jobs for the local youth are issues that could sway this election.

The statehood promise resonates with people as they still remember the 2016-2021 public spats between then L-G Kiran Bedi and CM V Narayanaswamy. The incumbent Rangasamy government has also been criticised for not holding civic-body polls despite a Supreme Court order.

People are also upset with the government for not focusing on infrastructure issues, including drainage and other basic amenities. They also say no effort has been made to address traffic congestion in the tiny UT, and accuse the outgoing administration of not fulfilling its promise of generating more jobs.

The politics of it

Rangasamy is pinning his hopes on the welfare schemes — Direct Benefit Transfers to the elderly, destitute women, women heads of BPL families, and cyclone relief for ration cardholders — and infrastructure projects like new roads, new buses, and industrial estates. However, if the Congress capitalises on anti-incumbency, it could bring him down.

Opposition parties also allege that a 30%-commission culture has taken root in the UT, and that 90% of the promises made to the people remain unfulfilled.

A traditional Congress stronghold, Puducherry has sprung surprises in the past by voting the DMK into power thrice and the AIADMK twice. Vijay believes luck could be on his side this time, but his party has nothing to bank on except his on-screen popularity.

The BJP entered the Puducherry Assembly via the back door: Three party functionaries were nominated between 2016 and 2021.

It then aligned with AINRC in 2021, sidelining the AIADMK, and joined the government by winning six seats. It made inroads in no time with Congress rebels like then-home minister A Namassivayam.

For the past few years, the DMK has also been making silent inroads into the UT and hopes for better results.

The bottom line

This is a make-or-break election for the Congress, which is why it has projected Vaithilingam over ex-CM Narayanaswamy, who is seen as a Delhi man due to his long stint in the national capital.

If Rangasamy is trounced, it would be sweet revenge for both the Congress and Vaithilingam. If the Congress loses, this will be the first time in several decades that it will be out of power in the UT for two consecutive terms.

However, a second consecutive term for Rangasamy would not only validate his standing as a popular leader but also reinforce the BJP's strength in managing complex coalition politics and help it build an independent base in the UT.

India: No Musk on Modi-Trump call

NEW DELHI, PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with US President Donald Trump. PTI FILE

India on Saturday rejected a media report that said billionaire Elon Musk joined a phone conversation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump earlier this week.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said Tuesday's conversation was between the two leaders only.

The *New York Times*, quoting unnamed US officials, reported that Musk participated in the call between Trump and Modi, adding it was an "unusual appearance" by a private citizen on a call between two heads of state.

"We have seen the story. The telephone conversation on March 24 was between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump only," Jaiswal said.

"As has been stated earlier, it provided the opportunity for exchange of views on the situation in West Asia," he said.

In its report, the *New York Times* said it is "unclear" why Musk was on the call or whether he spoke.

Our prime minister only spoke to Trump, and there was no one else who spoke to the PM, people familiar with the matter said.

They suggested that it is for Washington to clarify if somebody else was in the room or listening to the conversation.

The *New York Times* said Musk's participation in the phone call signalled a reconciliation between the billionaire and Trump.

The two had fallen out last year following Musk's exit from a government task force charged with slashing the federal workforce.

The US president had initiated the phone call with Modi to discuss the West Asia crisis.

It was the first conversation between the two leaders since the West Asia conflict began on February 28.

PM, Saudi Crown Prince discuss West Asia crisis, call for safe navigation

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday spoke with Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman, emphasising the need to ensure freedom of navigation and secure shipping routes.

"Spoke with Crown Prince and PM of Saudi Arabia, HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and discussed the ongoing conflict in West Asia. I reiterated India's condemnation of attacks on regional energy infrastructure [sic]," the Prime M inister posted on X.

"We agreed on the need to ensure freedom of navigation and keeping shipping lines open and secure [sic]," he said.

The Prime M inister said he also thanked the Saudi crown prince for his continued support for the welfare of the Indian community in the kingdom.

This was the second phone call between the two leaders since the West Asia conflict began on February 28.

Saudi Arabia is home to nearly 40 lakh Indians, one of whom was recently killed in attacks on Riyadh.

Centre asks departments to counter fake news

Stresses joint action and time-bound implementation of policies

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Security personnel carry domestic LPG cylinders as they arrive at a warehouse of Indane gas agency at Jagdalpur, in Chhattisgarh, on Saturday. PTI

In its first meeting on Saturday, the informal Group of Ministers (I-GoM) on West Asia asked central government departments to counter "rumours, misinformation and fake news" and work in close coordination with state and district administrations.

Seven empowered Groups of Secretaries made presentations outlining key issues and policy measures before the I-GoM, headed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

The meeting was attended by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Health Minister JP Nadda, Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, Power Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Prahlad Joshi, Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu, and MoS in the PMO Jitendra Singh.

"It was directed that all ministries and departments share relevant information, developments and advisories related to the ongoing situation through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's WhatsApp channel to ensure dissemination of accurate information to citizens and to effectively counter rumours, misinformation and fake news," the Union government said in a statement.

Key concerns reviewed included risks to energy supplies, domestic availability of essential commodities, critical infrastructure resilience and robustness of India's supply chains amid the West Asia conflict.

"There was in-depth discussion on all the measures being taken. The government is closely monitoring the situation and it is committed to safeguard the Indian people from any impact of the conflict," Rajnath said in a social media post.

The defence minister asked the secretaries to continue with close monitoring of the situation while taking a medium- to long-term approach in overall preparedness.

He also asked officials to ensure high-level coordination and swift decision-making, so that all policy efforts are implemented in a time-bound manner.

Centre pushes for rapid expansion of PNG networks

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Amid LPG supply constraints due to the ongoing West Asia conflict, the Central government on Saturday pushed for a rapid expansion of Piped Natural Gas (PNG) networks across urban areas in the country.

A group of Union ministers held a roundtable meeting with state representatives and industry stakeholders, and outlined key priorities — including a single-window clearance system, integration of gas pipelines into urban planning, and improved last-mile connectivity.

An ambitious target of providing 50 lakh new PNG connections was highlighted during the meeting that was attended by the likes of Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi.

States and urban local bodies (ULBs) had agreed to streamline approvals, designate nodal officers, and enhance coordination among various departments, said the Urban Affairs Ministry in a statement after the meeting.

Bottlenecks discussed

It saw discussions on bottlenecks slowing PNG expansion, including delays in municipal permissions, right-of-way (RoW) approvals, and high restoration charges. States flagged the need to rationalise or waive such charges and adopt time-bound clearance systems.

On concerns arising from LPG supply disruptions, Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi emphasised maintaining an uninterrupted supply of essential fuels, curbing misinformation, and preventing black marketing, said the statement.

The stakeholders agreed on a structured action plan with defined timelines, formation of local task teams, and regular monitoring to ensure faster rollout of PNG networks across urban centres, the statement added.

PM: Govt shielding citizens, farmers from conflict impact

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said that the Union government was taking steps to ensure that there was no burden on common people and farmers from the West Asia conflict.

Addressing a public meeting after inaugurating the first phase of the Noida International Airport in Greater Noida, Modi acknowledged that there was a scarcity of petrol, diesel, gas and essential commodities in many countries because of the conflict.

"India is tackling the situation with the strength of the people. Developmental activities have not stopped in the crisis. Uttar Pradesh has got several projects in the past few weeks," he said.

Modi attacked the SP and the Congress for allegedly not showing any interest in the Noida International project when they were in power.

"Noida was an ATM for the SP. The then-CM (SP chief Akhilesh Yadav) was scared of visiting Noida, fearing that he would lose power. Some people also tried to scare me. Under the BJP government, Noida has emerged as a powerful engine of growth for UP," he said, adding that Jewar airport in the Gautam Buddha Nagar district was a fitting example of the "double-engine" work culture.

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister

"I once again appeal to the people of the country that we must face this crisis calmly, with patience and unity. This is a global crisis, but we must prioritise India's interests. That is our greatest strength.

He said that this airport would benefit the region, including Agra, Aligarh, Ghaziabad, Meerut, and Faridabad. Modi said that an airport is not merely a general facility, but that it also gives wings to development.

"The country had only 74 airports before 2014, but now there are more than 160," he said.

The prime minister said the Union government was trying to make sure that the airfare remained within the reach of ordinary families, and referred to the "UDAN" scheme, saying 1.6 crore people had travelled under it since its launch.

Former Raymond chief Vijaypat Singhania dies at 87

MUMBAI, PTI: Former Raymond chairman Vijaypat Singhania died here on Saturday evening, his family said. He was 87.

His son Gautam Singhania, the group's current chairman and managing director, announced the death on the microblogging platform 'X'.

Vijaypat Singhania

Singhania passed away "peacefully" in Mumbai, and the last rites will be performed on Sunday, a Raymond Group spokesperson said.

Singhania, a recipient of the Padma Bhushan, was also a keen aviator and held a world record for the highest altitude gained in a hot air balloon.

He led Raymond as chairman for two decades till 2000. After handing over the reins of the company to Gautam, Vijaypat also transferred his entire 37% stake to his son. Singhania and his son were embroiled in legal disputes some years ago, but later they settled the issues.

Andhra resolution seeks capital status for Amaravati

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

CM N Chandrababu Naidu speaks in the Legislative Assembly in Amaravati on Saturday. PTI

The Andhra Pradesh Assembly on Saturday unanimously passed a resolution urging the Union government to grant legal recognition to Amaravati as the state capital by amending the AP Reorganisation Act.

The resolution, moved by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu following a 5.5-hour debate, seeks statutory clarity on an issue that has long dominated the state's politics.

The Assembly specifically called upon the Central government to amend Section 5 of the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014, by inserting the words "at Amaravati" in sub-section (2) and expanding the accompanying explanation to clarify that Amaravati encompasses areas notified under the AP Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2014. The state government will now forward the resolution to New Delhi.

A special session was convened solely for this resolution. Tabling it, Naidu unequivocally declared that Amaravati was, and would remain, the state's only permanent capital, with unchallengeable legal and constitutional sanctity.

Naidu sharply criticised former CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy and the YSRCP, branding them "betrayers of Amaravati" for their shifting stance and repeated attempts to derail the capital project. He said that while the state's bifurcation had not troubled him, the continued obstruction of its progress did. He issued a stern warning that anyone attempting to create unrest, sabotage development, or interfere with Amaravati's growth would face severe consequences.

Accusing Jagan of "chameleon politics," Naidu recalled that the then-Opposition leader had initially extended unconditional support to the capital project, stating he did not wish to create hurdles for a small state of 13 districts, only to reverse course thereafter.

Despite recorded statements and public commitments between 2014 and 2019, Naidu alleged, Jagan tried to undermine the project even as farmers had voluntarily pooled over 33,000 acres of land for the capital, sowing uncertainty and distrust.

AERIAL POWER

IAF MiG-29s to get more lethal missiles, this time from Europe

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Indian Air Force (IAF)'s MiG-29 combat jets will pack more punch in the future, with the Central government initiating a process to equip them with European-made advanced short-range air-to-air missiles (ASRAAMs), replacing the current Russian weapons.

Earlier this week, the Defence Ministry invited bids to arm the Russian-origin fighter aircraft with next-generation close-combat missiles having a range of 25 km. The IAF currently operates over 50 of these fighter jets, including eight two-seater trainers.

The ASRAAMs will replace the legacy R-73 missiles — a 1980s-era infrared-guided weapon with a range of 10-15 km — with a far more advanced, fourth-generation missile.

Facility in Hyderabad

The weapon's maker, MBDA, has reportedly partnered with Bharat Dynamics Limited and is said to be setting up an assembly and test facility in Hyderabad. This augmentation of the IAF comes alongside the Defence Acquisition Council okaying several proposals to strengthen it.

"For the IAF, proposals were cleared for the procurement of medium transport aircraft, S-400 long-range surface-to-air missile system," said a Defence Ministry statement after a DAC meeting Singh chaired on Friday.

Separatist leader Shabir Shah gets bail

NEW DELHI, PTI: A Delhi court on Saturday granted bail to Kashmiri separatist leader Shabir Shah in a money laundering case linked to terror funding.

Special Judge Prashant Sharma granted Shah the relief. A reasoned order is awaited.

On March 12, the Supreme Court granted bail to Shah in a terror funding case, in which he was arrested by the NIA on June 4, 2019.

Shah allegedly played a "substantial role" in facilitating a separatist movement in J&K by inciting the general public to raise slogans in support of J&K's secession.

It is the people's desire for a change in Assam. Because they know that wherever Congress is in power, it means that people of every section is in power. Congress unites people, BJP divides them

DH DECCAN HERALD

Political Theatre

If the BJP comes to power in the state, they will use bulldozers and throw everyone out. By attempting to destroy Bengal, the BJP will lose power across the country

Poll vault

Gulf Gamble

An announcement by a senior Indian Union Muslim League leader offering a "free Gulf trip" to local functionaries if the United Democratic Front candidate wins by a big margin has sparked debate in Malappuram district. State vice president C P Bava Haji made the offer at a Thavanur convention, promising a 15-day Gulf tour for party office-bearers who secure the highest lead for UDF candidate and DCC president V S Joy. The package includes travel, accommodation and other expenses, while urging workers to maximise votes.

Swinging both sides

While Bharath Dharma Jana Sena (BDJS) headed by Thushar Vellappally continues to be key coalition partner of Kerala BJP that aims at a clear mandate in this Kerala elections, his father Vellappally Natesan, who is the general secretary of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP), predicts third consecutive term for the CPM-led Left Democratic Front.

While the father-son duo are often criticised for trying to have their feet in two boats, now Natesan's wife Preethi Natesan is also chipping in by predicting a BJP-NDA sweep. BDJS's formation was announced by Natesan in 2015 at a major event in Thiruvananthapuram and Thushar, who is vice-president of SNDP, is remaining as its president since then. He even contested the 2019 Lok Sabha election as NDA candidate against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Wayanad.

The whisper in the corridors is that pending cases against Natesan in Kerala and ED probe against him earlier are the reason why the family prefers to have their feet in two boats. Natesan was even honoured with Padma Bhushan award recently. It raised many eyebrows as he is accused in over hundred cases, mostly pertaining to misappropriation of funds of SNDP's micro-finance scheme, and one case pertaining to the abetment of suicide of an SNDP former official.

ARJUN RAGHUNATH, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Meet the leader

Debabrata Saikia
Congress
Nazira

The Leader of the Opposition in the outgoing Assembly, Debabrata Saikia, will contest from the family stronghold of Nazira, represented by his father and late Chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia and his mother and former minister Hemoprava Saikia. He has represented the constituency since 2011 and seeks to retain it for the fourth consecutive term, though he had won the last polls by a slim margin of less than 500 votes.

Saikia, 61, is now among the four key strategists in Congress led by Gaurav Gogoi. He is a prominent face in Upper Assam politics, where the Congress is trying to regain its vote bank particularly among the Ahoms, a community that still decides the fate in several constituencies. Saikia, also an Ahom, has been constantly questioning Himanta Biswa Sarma government on important issues concerning the state.

Saikia also played an important role in stitching the Congress-led alliance with five parties including Raijor Dal and Assam Jatiya Parishad, two anti-BJP regional political outfits.

Trivia

Prafulla Kumar Mahanta became India's youngest Chief Minister at 33 when he took oath in Assam on December 24, 1985. As chief of the All Assam Students' Union, Mahanta, still a student then, walked from the campus of Gauhati University to the historic Nehru Stadium, about 10 km away, where he was sworn in. Mahanta and his associates had led the six-year-long Assam Agitation, an anti-foreigners movement that culminated in the signing of the Assam Accord in the early hours of August 15, 1985. They went on to form the Asom Gana Parishad and contest the elections.

Communal connotations colour Kerala poll campaigns

Political leaders & community heads publicly vie to influence voters, though past results show limited impact

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

Maintaining a communal balance and equations is never new to electoral politics in Kerala. However, communalisation of electioneering is louder this time.

BJP leader and Guruvayur candidate B Gopalakrishnan's controversial "Hindu MLA" remark and Congress candidate Sarath Chandra Prasad's barb that his opponent — the CPM's Kadakampally Surendran, who is being linked to the accused in the Sabarimala gold heist case — would be "caught by the tigers of Lord Ayyappa" are all aimed at triggering communal sentiments in the Assembly elections.

KERALA
Assembly Poll

Meanwhile, the CPM and the Congress — in an effort to woo Muslim voters — are accusing each other of having struck covert deals with the BJP.

Kerala has been witnessing many such communal remarks — sometimes even by senior politicians. Political analysts point out that the trend is the outcome of the BJP-RSS' active role in Kerala politics.

"If the Congress and the CPM's communal campaigns were earlier aimed at minority-vote polarisation, they are now for Hindu vote polarisation. It could be seen as the outcome of the active entry of the BJP-RSS in Kerala's electoral politics," said senior journalist B V Pavanan.

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor campaigns for Uma Thomas in Thrikkakara constituency, in Kochi, on Saturday. PTI

The entry of the Bharat Dharma Jana Sena (BDJS) — a political forum linked to the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP) — into the BJP camp seems to have done away with the stigma of an openly communal stand among mainstream political parties. The SNDP, which follows the teachings of social reformer Sree Narayana Guru, is considered a highly secular body.

"Communal equations used to be discussed only during candidate selection. Afterwards, all were considered as leaders. There was even a chief minister from the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), C H Mohammed Koya. But now, the IUML is being given a communal colour," said senior journalist and political commentator Jacob George.

Leaders of various communities and churches are also openly supporting political parties, and they are in turn openly highlighting communal representation among candidates.

Vested interest

Kerala's voters have proved on several occasions that community leaders' political intervention has little influence on them. There is now a growing feeling among voters that community heads have vested interests in pleasing political leaders.

G Sukumaran Nair, who heads the Nair Service Society, which represents the Hindu Nair community, made an open statement in the run-up to the 2021 election against the then Left Front government, citing the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple women's entry issue. Nevertheless, the Left Front returned to power, even improving the number of seats it won.

Meanwhile, Congress leader V M Sudheeran won elections despite open moves against him by SNDP general secretary Vellappally Natesan.

Two EC officials relieved of poll duties over BJP seal issue

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PTI: Kerala Chief Electoral Officer Rathan U Kelkar on Saturday sent the Deputy CEO and a section officer back to their parent departments over an EC document sent to political parties that bore a BJP seal.

The decision was taken following an inquiry into the incident conducted by Additional CEO P B Nooh, IAS, a statement from EC said.

Based on the inquiry report, the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer and the section officer were relieved of their election-related duties and sent back to their parent departments, the statement added.

The controversy surfaced after the CPM flagged the issue on the social media platform 'X', sharing an affidavit attached to a March 19, 2019, letter sent to political parties that bore the BJP Kerala seal instead of the Election Commission's official seal.

The EC had termed it a "purely clerical error" and said it had been rectified immediately.

60 new faces in DMK's list

Party renominates majority of incumbent legislators

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Tamil Nadu's ruling DMK on Saturday renominated a majority of its incumbent legislators, including Chief Minister M K Stalin, his deputy Udhayanidhi, and their cabinet colleagues, for the April 23 Assembly elections, while giving tickets to about 60 new faces, including those who have worked at the grassroots level.

TAMIL NADU
Assembly Poll

DMK nominees will contest 164 seats and another 11 candidates on the party's Rising Sun symbol, taking the number to 175. Alliance partners will contest the remaining 59 seats.

One of the most surprising elements in the list was fielding former minister and Karur MLA V Senthil Balaji from the prestigious Coimbatore (South), in a bid to take the battle into the AIADMK-BJP bastion. In the 2021 elections, the DMK failed to win any of the 10 seats in the Coimbatore district, while it won majorly across the state.

Balaji contesting from the industrial capital of Tamil Nadu might have ripple effects in the region, which has favoured the AIADMK in Assembly elections.

Stalin denied opportunity only to three sitting ministers, while he renominated the rest, including the 87-year-old Durai Murugan, K K S S R Ramachandran (77), K N Nehru and I Periyasamy (both 73) from the Old Guard of the DMK.

He also renominated about 100 of the 126 MLAs. Interestingly, O Panneerselvam, R Vaithilingam, and P H Manoj Pandian, expelled AIADMK leaders who recently joined the DMK, have been fielded from Bodinayakanur, Orathanadu, and Alangulam.

Ministers P T R Palanivel Thiaga Rajan, Thangam Thenarasu, T R B Raaja, P K Sekarbabu, Geetha Jeevan, Anitha R Radhakrishnan, and T M Anbarasu were renominated from their respective constituencies.

Kanimozhi not on list

Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, who reportedly expressed interest in contesting Assembly elections, did not figure in the list.

The youngest candidate announced by the party is Kokila Mani, a 26-year-old doctor, contesting from Avinashi.

As many as 60 new faces, including union secretaries & ground workers, are elevated. Of the 164 candidates, 18 are women, 29 lawyers, 17 engineers, 15 doctors, and 7 PhDs.

EC releases 3rd supplementary roll in Bengal, silent on changes

KOLKATA, PTI: The Election Commission on Saturday published the third supplementary voter list under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

The poll panel, however, did not provide details on the total number of deletions or inclusions in the third list, which follows the publication of the second supplementary list on Friday night.

The commission had released the first supplementary list of 'Under Adjudication' voters on Monday (March 23) but remained tight-lipped on the number of deletions or the precise figure of cases disposed of on that list, drawing criticism from various quarters.

According to an EC official, the "supplementary list" refers to an additional list of voters' names that are included after the publication of the final roll.

These typically cover newly enrolled voters, corrections in details, and names restored after verification. Alongside this, the office has also released corresponding deletion lists, which contain names removed due to reasons such as duplication, death, or shifting of residence.

Election officials said the phased publication of supplementary lists ensures that all eligible voters are included while maintaining the accuracy of the rolls ahead of upcoming electoral exercises. "As directed by the court, the supplementary list will be published on a regular basis now," the official said.

NDA will return to power by winning over 90 seats: Shah

GUWAHATI, PTI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday asserted that the BJP-led NDA will return to power in Assam for the third consecutive term by winning more than 90 seats in the 126-member assembly.

ASSAM
Assembly Poll

Shah made the statement as he kick-started his two-day visit to the poll-bound state with a roadshow in Guwahati.

"The people of Assam are excited to form the NDA government in the state. We will form the government again with more than 90 seats," he said.

Shah said that under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, world-class infrastructure has been built in the state. "In Assam, extremism, bomb blasts, and firing have stopped. Health infrastructure is being developed here. The state has become the hub of health and education in the entire Northeast," he said.

Shah said huge employment opportunities have been created, and modern industries like semiconductor manufacturing units are being set up.

In the outgoing Assembly, the BJP had 64 MLAs, while its allies AGP had nine, UPPL seven and BPF three members.

In the opposition camp, the Congress has 26 MLAs, the AIUDF has 15, and the CPM has one MLA. There is one Independent legislator also.

The former BJP president held the roadshow in support of CM Himanta Biswa Sarma, who is fighting the polls from the Jalukbari seat, Guwahati Central candidate Vijay Kumar Gupta, New Guwahati's Diplu Ranjan Sarmah, Dispur's Pradyut Bordoloi, and AGP's Dimoria nominee Tapan Das.

Except for Sarma, all candidates accompanied Shah during the roadshow, which was also attended by state BJP president Dilip Saikia.

POLITICAL BOW

Union Home Minister Amit Shah being greeted by Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari, in Kolkata, West Bengal, on Saturday. PTI

Congress discusses candidates for West Bengal polls at CEC meet

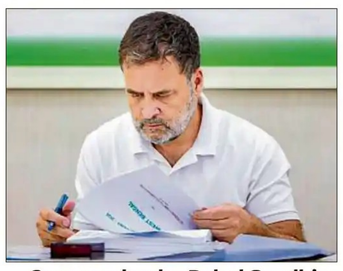
NEW DELHI, PTI: Top Congress leaders on Saturday held detailed deliberations on the party's candidates for the upcoming West Bengal Assembly elections during a meeting of the Central Election Committee (CEC) here.

A senior Congress leader said after the meeting that the party will contest all 294 assembly seats in the state, leaving none vacant.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chief Rahul Gandhi, along with AICC general secretary (Organisation) K C Venugopal and leaders from West Bengal, attended the meeting.

Talking to reporters, Mir said, "Today, a CEC meeting was held... and the candidature of all the candidates was discussed. All except eight candidates will be announced by later tonight or early tomorrow morning".

"We will contest all 294 assembly seats in West Bengal, leaving none vacant. This was the wish of our workers and rank and file in the state since the beginning. We have received 2,500 applications for these 294 seats," Mir added.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the party's CEC meeting. PTI

On the Congress candidate for Bhawanipur — from where Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is contesting — he said the party views every worker as a potential leader. "Every ordinary worker is also a big leader. Anyone who contests from Bhawanipur will be a big leader for us."

GREENER PASTURE

Bengal cops continue to swap khaki for khadi

SUMIT PANDE
NEW DELHI, DHNS

West Bengal Police officials continue to display a penchant for discarding the khaki for the khadi — a trend that took root with the Trinamool Congress (TMC)'s 2011 victory and has since crystallised in state politics as more serving and retired cops enter electoral politics every poll season.

Among the current TMC legislators, Humayun Kabir joined it in 2021. The former IPS officer won from Debra, polling more than 95,000 votes. For the 2026 polls, Kabir has been shifted to Domkal in the Murshidabad district.

Last month, Chief Minister and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee also nominated Rajeev Kumar to the Rajya Sabha. Kumar served as the state director general of police (DGP) till January.

Considered close to Banerjee, he once came under CBI scrutiny when the federal agency was investigating the Saradha scam.

The BJP, too, has fielded a former Kolkata Police chief as its candidate this time. Rajesh Kumar — a 1990-batch IPS officer who retired recently — is its candidate from the Jagatdal Assembly constituency, pitted against TMC heavyweight Somenath Shyam. Kumar was appointed the Kolkata Police chief by the Election Commission (EC) ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

WEST BENGAL
Assembly Poll

This trend was normalised in 2011, when Banerjee — the then-Union minister for railways in the Manmohan Singh Cabinet — pulled out all the stops to end the over-three-decades' Left Front rule in the state. She fielded four retired Bengal-cadre IPS officers and a top IAS official to challenge the CPM-led government.

Manish Gupta — a former chief secretary who worked closely with CPM stalwart and former CM Jyoti Basu — was fielded against Basu's successor Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee.

Gupta emerged as a giantkiller, defeating Bhattacharjee from Jadavpur — a seat the then-CM had held since 1987 and the CPM since 1967.

Gupta became the power minister in the TMC government, and was later rewarded with a Rajya Sabha berth.

The TMC fielded some top Bengal-cadre cops in the same election. The most prominent among them was Haider Aziz Safwi. The former IPS officer was elected from the Uluberia (East) Assembly seat. He won on a TMC ticket on two occasions and served as a minister. At the time of his death in 2018, he was deputy speaker in the Assembly.

Sultan Singh was another top IPS officer who entered the electoral fray on a TMC ticket. The former Howrah superintendent of police (SP) joined active politics after his 2004 retirement and unsuccessfully contested the 2004 Lok Sabha polls on a Congress ticket. He shifted to the TMC, contesting the 2011 Assembly polls from Bally.

Upendranath Biswas was probably the most famous cop on the TMC candidate list in 2011. A 1968-batch IPS officer retired as additional director of the CBI in 2002. He had investigated the Fodder Scam against Bihar ex-CM Lalu Prasad. He won the 2011 Bengal Assembly polls and was appointed the minister for backward-class welfare.

Rachhpal Singh, another IPS officer from the state, who belonged to the Sikh community, contested Tarakeshwar in Hooghly in 2011. In 2016, he was made the minister for statistics and programme implementation, a post he held till months before his 2021 death.

But not all IPS officers won elections on TMC symbols. A former Bengal-cadre IPS officer, Prasun Banerjee, lost the 2024 LS polls to the BJP from Malda North.

Meanwhile, former IPS officer Debasish Dhar got a BJP ticket to contest the 2024 Lok Sabha polls from Birbhum. His nomination papers were, however, rejected upon scrutiny. Former Calcutta High Court judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay resigned from the higher judiciary to join the BJP just ahead of the 2024 LS polls. He is currently a member of Parliament, representing Tamluk in the Purba Medinipur district

NEIGHBOUR FIRST Country's youthful leadership faces early tests at home and abroad

Nepal's political shift offers India a chance to reset ties

RANJIT RAE

Now that the dust and din of the elections have subsided, the Balendra Shah-led Rashtriya Swatantra Party government, which has secured close to a two-thirds majority, must hit the ground running. It carries the hopes of millions of Nepali citizens who want good—corruption-free—governance and rapid economic development. The government must address several serious issues, both domestic and international.

The Gulf crisis linked to tensions in West Asia is hitting Nepal hard. Skyrocketing oil prices, fertiliser shortages, a depreciating currency, declining remittances and, above all, the safety of its citizens require urgent attention, especially if the conflict prolongs. India, similarly affected, is in a position to help if requested, as it did during the COVID crisis.

For a new government with relatively young and untested leaders, it has acted quickly on demands to punish those responsible for the killing of innocent youths during the Gen Z protests of September 8, 2025. Both former prime minister K P Sharma Oli and former home minister Ramesh Lekhak, indicted in the judicial inquiry, have been arrested. It remains to be seen what steps will be taken to bring to book those who destroyed State property on September 9, 2025.

Over the next few months, Nepal is expected to graduate from LDC status to that of a developing country. This will affect tariff preferences provided by developed countries and the availability of grant assistance, especially from multilateral financial institutions. Nepalese exports and foreign aid could be impacted, requiring careful policy attention. Indian grant assistance, however, will remain unaffected.

With India, Nepal's most important bilateral partner, a wide range of issues—including some irritants—remain on the agenda. Now is the time to focus on win-win development cooperation such as hydropower, connectivity in all its forms, especially digital finance, and infrastructure development. In due course, the irritants will also need to be addressed. With a government enjoying a large majority, discussions could begin on the 1950 Treaty on Peace and Friendship that Nepal wants to amend, as well as the boundary dispute.

Above all, a relationship of mutual trust and understanding must be forged with Nepal's new leadership. Some progress has already been made. India strongly supported the elections and provided logistical materiel. Prime Minister Modi has had a friendly conversation with the new leadership and warm messages have been exchanged. An early meeting of top political leaders could pave the way for progress on the bilateral agenda. It is important to hold the Joint Commission at the level of the foreign ministers. Periodic political reviews, followed by regular monitoring of bilateral projects, are essential for better delivery and efficiency. These mechanisms should be strengthened and insulated from fluctuations in the relationship. A special focus is needed on hydropower cooperation.

Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra Shah holds his daughter Niloufer Shah as first lady Sabina Kafle stands behind him at Shital Niwas, the presidential building in Kathmandu, on Friday. REUTERS

A quick deal on the 6,000 MW Pancheshwar project could significantly strengthen ties. The benefits to Nepal of exporting electricity to India, and through India to Bangladesh, are already helping reduce Nepal's trade deficit with India.

Other major bilateral hydropower projects, including Arun III, Upper Karnali and West Seti, also need to progress rapidly under Indian public and private sector companies implementing them. Guidelines for the export of Nepalese power to India could be eased, particularly in view of the Gulf crisis linked to developments in West Asia.

People-to-people ties remain the foundation of bilateral relations. Facilitating cross-border connections, developing the Ramayana and Buddhist circuits, and strengthening academic exchanges are important. Balendra Shah is the first Madhesi prime minister of Nepal. He launched his campaign from Janakpur, the spiritual and political centre of the Madhesh, and his swearing-in ceremony was organised on the occasion of Ram Navami. India should deliver quickly on commitments made at the level of the President and the Prime Minister for the development of the ancient town.

In the new Nepalese government, India will deal with a group of youthful, talented and well-educated leaders. Balendra himself is an engineer graduate from Nitte Meenakshi Institute of Technology in Bengaluru. Several other leaders are educated in the US and other Western countries. They appear pragmatic and non-ideological and are unlikely to indulge in the balancing games seen in the past. While maintaining friendly relations with China, they are likely to judge BRI projects on economic viability and national benefit. India's neighbourhood policy must recognise the changes taking place in the region. Youth movements have reshaped politics in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and now Nepal. The median age in these countries is below 30, and this digitally connected generation is impatient and eager for a better life. India needs to make youth and development partnerships central to its neighbourhood-first policy.

The dramatic changes in Nepal have created an opportunity for a reset in the bilateral relationship. The historical baggage that has long bedevilled ties may now recede. The challenge for the new leadership is to meet the sky-high expectations of the people. India can help by extending full support and cooperation. A friendly, stable and prosperous Nepal is in India's strategic interest.

(The writer is a former Ambassador to Nepal)

WORLD AT A GLANCE

Nasa astronauts, who will be on board the Artemis II mission flight, take part in an event at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida. REUTERS

French police foil plot to bomb Bank of America building

▸ French police foiled an apparent bomb attack outside a US bank in Paris early on Saturday when they arrested a man about to set off a homemade explosive device, AFP reports from Paris.

The incident occurred around 3:30 am (0130 GMT) in front of a Bank of America building in the chic 8th arrondissement, a couple of streets from the Champs-Élysées. Police detained the man just after he placed a device made of five litres of liquid, believed to be fuel, along with an ignition system, one of the sources said. The ignition component contained 650 grams (23 ounces) of explosive powder, according to an initial assessment. The entire device was taken to the Paris police forensics laboratory for full analysis. France's counter-terrorism prosecutor's office told AFP it had immediately taken over the investigation and confirmed that the suspect was in police custody. It said the probe had been launched into "attempted damage by fire or other dangerous means in connection with a terrorist undertaking" and a "terrorist criminal conspiracy". Both the Paris judicial police and France's domestic intelligence service, the General Directorate for Internal Security, were involved in the investigation.

22 migrants die off Greece

▸ Twenty-two migrants hoping to reach Europe from North Africa have died off the coast of Greece after six days at sea in a rubber boat, AFP reports from Athens.

The coastguard said late Friday that 26 people, including a woman and a minor, were rescued by a European border agency vessel off the island of Crete. The coastguard later told AFP that 21 Bangladeshis, four South Sudanese and a Chadian citizen had survived the ordeal. Survivors said the bodies of those who had died were thrown into the Mediterranean Sea on the orders of one of the people smugglers aboard the boat. Two survivors were taken to hospital in Heraklion on Crete, the coastguard said. Based on survivor statements, the coastguard said the boat had left Tobruk, a port city in eastern Libya, on March 21 bound for Greece.

UAE, Qatar ink deal with Ukraine for air defence

Zelenskyy signs agreements during West Asia tour

KYIV, AFP

Ukraine and Qatar signed a defence agreement on Saturday that includes cooperation on countering threats from missiles and drones, the West Asian state's government said, as Iran presses an aerial campaign against its neighbours.

Earlier on Saturday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy—during a previously unannounced flurry of visits to West Asian nations—said his country and the United Arab Emirates had agreed to cooperate on defence amid drones launched by Iran in retaliation for US-Israeli strikes.

Ukraine also signed an air defence agreement with Saudi Arabia during Zelenskyy's visit to the kingdom, two senior officials said. Kyiv has sought to leverage its expertise in downing Russian drones to help West Asian nations and has deployed anti-drone experts to all the three countries.

Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Doha on Saturday. AFP

5 Indians injured in UAE

Five Indians were injured in the UAE by the fall of debris in the vicinity of the Khalifa Economic Zones Abu Dhabi following interception of a ballistic missile by the country's air defence system, PTI reports from Dubai.

The Abu Dhabi Media Office confirmed that the incident resulted in injuries to five individuals of Indian nationality, ranging from moderate to minor. "The competent authorities urge the public to obtain information from official sources only, and to avoid circulating rumours or unverified information," it said.

"The agreement includes collaboration in technological fields, development of joint investments and the exchange of expertise in countering missiles and unmanned aerial systems," Qatar's defence ministry said in a statement during Zelenskyy's visit. Ukraine has not disclosed what exactly has been agreed as part of the deals.

US may not be there for Nato if needed: Trump

MIAMI, AFP

United States President Donald Trump on Friday reiterated his disappointment with Nato allies over their refusal to send military forces to help secure the Strait of Hormuz and said Washington may not help them in future if asked to do so.

"They just weren't there," he said at an investment forum in Miami.

"We spend hundreds of billions of dollars a year on Nato, hundreds, protecting them, and we would have always been there for them, but now, based on their actions, I guess we don't have to be, do we? Why would we be there for them if they're not there for us? They weren't there for us."

Since the start of the US-Israeli offensive against Iran a month ago, Trump has repeatedly voiced frustration over Western allies' lack of support and reluctance to commit forces to help reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a key sea lane for Gulf oil and gas exports vulnerable to Iranian attacks.

Traffic through the narrow waterway has ground to a virtual standstill, leading to a surge in global energy prices.

Six key powers, including Britain, France, Germany and Japan, say they are ready to "contribute to appropriate efforts" but have not made any commitment.

A man takes part in a protest against US President Donald Trump in Vienna, Austria, on Saturday. REUTERS

PAK TO HOST MEET

■ Pakistan is set to host the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Turkiye for discussions on a wide-range of issues, including efforts to de-escalate tensions in West Asia amid the war in Iran, the Foreign Office said on Saturday.

WTO: World's first baseline digital trade rules introduced

YAOUNDE, REUTERS: A group of World Trade Organisation members agreed on Saturday to sidestep adoption hurdles for the world's first baseline digital trade rules, opting to bring the agreement into force among consenting participants, the WTO said.

In recent years, efforts by a group of countries to fold the E-Commerce Agreement into the WTO rulebook were twice blocked by dissenting members. The pact aims to foster an open environment for digital trade.

The push to accelerate entry into force among members who represent 70% of global trade stems from mounting frustration over those obstructions, a senior diplomat told Reuters. Under WTO rules, plurilateral agreements among subsets of members require consensus. At the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference in Cameroon, 66 members settled on an interim arrangement to activate the deal within their countries while pursuing broader incorporation into the WTO framework.

Japan's State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Yamada Kenji, hailed it as a "historic step" towards global digital trade rules.

People take part in a pro-Scottish independence rally in Edinburgh on Saturday. AFP

Trump signature on $100 bills

▸ When US President Donald Trump's signature appears on $100 bills in June, it will place him among a small band of sitting leaders, often associated with autocratic rule, whose autographs or images have through history graced their currencies, Reuters reports.

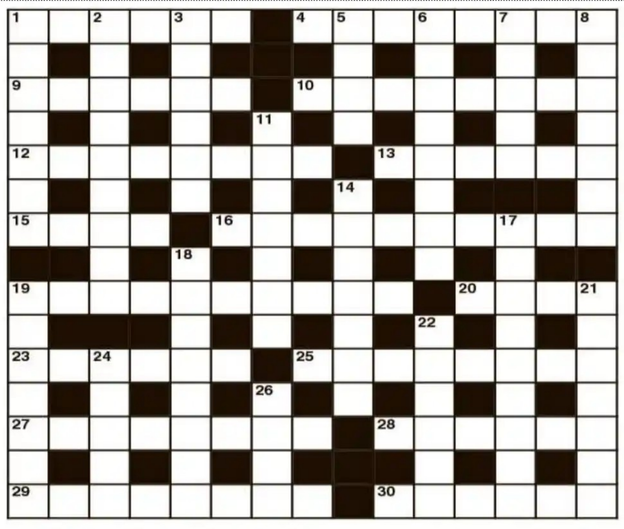
It will also end 165 years of the US Treasurer signing banknotes. Banknotes around the world often show the signature of a central bank, treasury or other official associated with the printing and issuing of money. Euro notes bear the signature of the European Central Bank president, and every sterling banknote has that of the chief cashier of the Bank of England, originally written by hand. Soviet roubles carried the signature of a finance minister or central banker for a couple of decades until 1937.

Indonesia bans social media for kids

▸ Indonesia on Saturday began implementing a new government regulation that bans children younger than 16 from access to digital platforms that could expose them to pornography, cyberbullying, online scams and addiction, AP/PTI reports from Jakarta.

With the move, Indonesia became the first country in Southeast Asia to ban children from having accounts on YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Threads, X, Bigo Live and Roblox. It follows measures that Australia took last year in a world-first social media ban for children as part of a push for families to take back power from tech giants and protect their teens.

◆ SUNDAY CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 2673 ◆



ACROSS

1 Affectedly shy and quiet (6)
4 International tennis trophy (5,3)
9 Close at hand (6)
10 Southernmost tip of South America (4,4)
12 Quadruple (8)
13 Wild cherry liqueur (6)
15 Barely submerged ridge of rocks (4)
16 Sad sentimental film (4-6)
19 Wild and noisy (3-7)
20 Accompanied by (4)
23 Regular customer (6)
25 International waters (4,4)
27 Amount of money taken in business (8)
28 A card game (6)
29 Cause to explode (8)
30 Stalk vegetable (6)

DOWN

1 Ruined (4,3)
2 Reach required standard (7,2)
3 Snub (6)
5 Slightly open (4)
6 Listed individually (8)
7 Thwart (5)
8 Black leopard (7)
11 Branch of mathematics (7)
14 Distraught (7)
17 Position of extreme uncertainty (5-4)
18 Spare no expense or effort (2,2,4)
19 Generally considered (7)
21 Socks and stockings (7)
22 Accusation (6)
24 Cards used in fortune-telling (5)
26 Gusto (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 4033

CRYPTIC

ACROSS: 9, Ash blonde 10, Paint out 12, So-on 13, Banner 14, I-m-a-gin-e 15, Gone to pot 17, Big cheese 18, Succeed 20, G-I'd-eon 21, T-h-us 24, Con-test-s 26, Compound 28, Over 29, Bitter 31, Hangs up 34, Called for 36, First name 38, Rustler 39, Allows 40, Tall 41, P-inn-acle 42, Erroneous.

DOWN: 1, Pass-ages 2, Thrown 3, Uncapped 4, Pe-anU-t 5, Spare bed 6, Din-in-g-room 7, Attach-E 8, Fut-I-le 11, Reverse 16, Tr-eat-y 19, C-love 20, Gas 22, Hands 23, Cornet 25, Stiff price 26, (se)Car (rev.) 27, Con-curs 30, Th-reaten 31, Har-d wor-k 32, Peer-less 33, Sea-ling 35, Lassie 36, F-all-en 37, Amazon.

EASY

ACROSS: 9, Physician 10, Original 12, Ream 13, Tumble 14, Learner 15, Inoculate 17, Admiralty 18, Gristle 20, Asylum 21, Thor 24, Migraine 26, Amenable 28, Tote 29, Sneeze 31, Chilled 34, Weathered 36, Lost cause 38, Retrain 39, Racket 40, Bloc 41, Rebelled 42, Eliminate.

DOWN: 1, Sporting 2, Dynamo 3, Simulate 4, Enable 5, Rosemary 6, Fieldmouse 7, Rivalry 8, Carnal 11, Gruyere 16, Utters 19, Idiot 20, Ape 22, Halal 23, Maniac 25, Ignorantly 26, Ace 27, Steward 30, El Dorado 31, Cosmetic 32, Drenched 33, Cheaper 35, Antler 36, Locker 37, Unload.

SU DO KU X - 3869

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3					1	7		
	8				7	9		
4	7							
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	6			3				

SOLUTION TO 3868

7	2	9	1	6	4	8	3	5
4	5	3	9	8	2	1	6	7
6	8	1	3	5	7	9	2	4
9	6	2	4	3	1	5	7	8
3	1	7	8	2	5	4	9	6
5	4	8	7	9	6	2	1	3
2	9	4	6	7	8	3	5	1
1	3	6	5	4	9	7	8	2
8	7	5	2	1	3	6	4	9

To solve the puzzle:
The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

BIG DRAW Bengaluru's huge fan base, despite not winning a title in the first 17 years, is a masterclass in branding

The presence of Virat Kohli, whose association with Royal Challengers has survived more lows than highs, has greatly shaped franchise's brand. DH PHOTO/ PUSHKAR V

How RCB GREW into biggest IPL product

MADHU JAWALI
BENGALURU, DHNS

In a result-driven sporting culture, for long, Royal Challengers Bengaluru presented a fascinating contradiction. By conventional standards, it was an underachieving franchise. Yet, by almost every other yardstick that defines modern sport -- fan loyalty, cultural relevance and brand value -- it remained one of the most successful. And when the elusive trophy finally landed in their lap last year, it became the biggest brand in IPL.

The two Women's Premier League titles, under India's most popular female cricketer Smriti Mandhana, only enhanced its overall valuation -- the nearly USD 2 billion payout by the Aditya Birla-led consortium to take the ownership of the team, only validated this claim.

But its popularity, notwithstanding some of the most saleable faces in their ranks, was and still is befuddling. In a field where success is measured by its silverware count, RCB rewrote that rulebook. Seventeen years without a championship, and yet, one of the most loyal and growing fan bases in the IPL -- this is a masterclass in branding.

Harish Bijoor, business & brand strategy specialist, cites multiple factors for this phenomenon. A true blue Bengalurean, Bijoor has followed the team from its inception, and his acquaintance with Vijay Mallya, the original owner of the team, gave him a closer peak.

RCB's current stature, according to Bijoor, is the outcome of how it was built, what it came to represent and how it has adapted over time. Mallya, Virat Kohli and fan engagement programmes are the stand out reasons for its sustained growth, each of the three playing their part at various stages, but there are other crucial factors.

"Let me explain this step by step," Bijoor begins. "RCB was one of the most glamorous teams from the very beginning of the IPL in 2008. In fact, it stood out as one of the most glamorous among all the original teams. This was largely because every IPL team was a mix of business and Bollywood or film influence. Among them, two teams really stood out -- KKR, backed by Shah Rukh Khan, and RCB, led by Vijay Mallya.

"If you ask me, I would credit the entire visual appeal and early brand-building of RCB to Vijay Mallya. Despite how he may be viewed today, one has to give him credit where it's due. He brought a strong sense of style and flair, drawing from his branding experience with the UB Group.

"He very cleverly named the team Royal Challengers Bangalore (now Bengaluru), blending his liquor brand "Royal Challenge" with the team's identity. From there, he built the brand with great panache. While some aspects -- like the IPL parties -- were criticised later, at the time they were widely enjoyed. The cheerleaders, the events and the overall atmosphere created a larger-than-life aura around the team.

"Having personally attended many matches and events in those early years, I can say that this aura was very real. Mallya created a similar image for himself and for Kingfisher, and he successfully extended that same energy to RCB."

The ever-evolving demographics of Bengaluru, Bijoor points out, also contributed to the growth of RCB as a brand. An aspirational city found a sense of identity with the team itself.

"The second factor was Bengaluru itself. Over the years, especially even before the IPL began, the IT revolution had already started transforming the city. Bengaluru was becoming a highly diverse, modern, and cosmopolitan place, one of the most heterogeneous cities in India.

"So, you had two powerful forces at play: Vijay Mallya's brand-building and the evolution of Bengaluru as a city. It was modern, forward-looking, inclusive and culturally diverse. This unique combination gave RCB its brand authority.

"Over time, RCB built a strong fan base. And in a league format like the IPL, fan bases are everything. What started as a Bengaluru-fan base, expanded into a Karnataka-wide following. Bengaluru represented Karnataka, so the team naturally became a symbol of regional pride.

"In many ways, RCB became one of the defining identities of the city, alongside landmarks like Vidhana Soudha or even something as everyday as Bengaluru's traffic. These became symbolic elements of the city's identity, and RCB was right there among them."

RCB, from time to time, has faced criticism for "ignoring" the homegrown talent. The perception gained wider validation with the exit of Mallya and corporatisation of the franchise's administration.

"It was never a "local-only" team in the traditional sense," Bijoor notes while emphasising that changing Bangalore in RCB to Bengaluru wasn't a good idea. "Its biggest icons were not born in the city, but Bengaluru, as a cultural space, does not place such a demand. It adopts, and in doing so, it creates belonging. RCB benefited immensely from this dynamic -- growing from a city franchise into a symbol of a wider identity."

One of the biggest contributors to RCB's brand has undoubtedly been Kohli -- still easily the biggest draw in cricket. His unbroken association with the franchise and his exploits on the field have extended its popularity beyond Karnataka. The celebrations across India following their maiden IPL win last year were testimony RCB's appeal.

Before RCB was Kohlified, a strong local connect -- Icon player Rahul Dravid and Anil Kumble -- also helped the team build an emotional bond with fans in the initial years. The arrival of Chris Gayle, a masterstroke by then team's mentor Kumble, and AB de Villiers gave Bengaluru an unparalleled aura even as title eluded.

"Alongside Kohli, several other players have shaped the team's image over time. Interestingly, many of these key figures were not originally from Bengaluru. Yet, the city embraced them. That openness and inclusivity became part of the brand itself.

"Kohli's influence, in particular, has been immense. And even off-field associations -- like his relationship with Anushka Sharma -- have contributed to the team's broader image. In cricket, these extended personas often play a role in shaping public perception."

This does not mean results are irrelevant. A title undoubtedly transforms how the franchise is perceived. But RCB's journey shows that success in modern sport goes beyond what your trophy cabinet boasts. It's about creating moments to savour and having cult personalities to follow. That is why RCB continued to matter before off-field perception matched on-field performance last year. Though RCB's greatest moment was blighted by the stampede tragedy the following day, their appeal endures.

Timeless Vision wins feature

HYDERABAD RESULTS
Timeless Vision, trained by Laxman Singh and ridden by Yash Narredu, won the Donegal Plate, the feature event of the races on Saturday.
1. The Krishna Plate - 1100M: Dhanadeepa (Mukesh Kumar) 1; Most Beautiful (Akshay Kumar) 2; Golden Unicorn (P Sai Kumar) 3; Iconic Star (Rafique) 4. WB: 2-1/2, Nk, 2; T: 1:08.29. TB: Magan Singh; Fav: Dhanadeepa.
2. Crack Regiment Plate - 1200M: Catch The Worm (Akshay Kumar) 1; Arthisha (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Red Hot Punch (A Asbar) 3. WB: 3, 3-1/2, Nk; T: 1:11.98; TB: RH Sequeira; Fav: Arthisha.
3. Hidden Bloom Plate - 1200M: Brilliant Lad (Yash Narredu) 1; Tootsie Darling (P Trevor) 2; Mexican Wave (Akshay Kumar) 3; Only The Brave (Santosh Raj) 4. WB: 2, 4, 1/2; T: 1:11.70; TB: Laxman Singh; Fav: Brilliant Lad.
4. The Wanaparthy Plate - 1400M: Gold Touch (Yash Narredu) 1; Toshiro (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Digital Express (Akshay Kumar) 3; History Repeats (P Sai Kumar) 4; WB: 1-1/4, 1-1/4, 1-1/4. T: 1:24.99. TB: Laxman Singh; Fav: Gold Touch.
5. The Donegal Plate 1200M: Timeless Vision (Yash Narredu) 1; Sugar (A Asbar) 2; Walking Thunder (P Trevor) 3; Calista Girl (Gaurav Singh) 4. WB: 3/4, 2, 2. T: 1:11.15. Not Run: Azrinaz, Romantic Grey & Star Of Opera. TB: Laxman Singh; Fav: Timeless Vision.
6. The Nalgonda Plate - 1400M: Feel The Magic (Mukesh Kumar) 1; Daring Spirit (P Sai Kumar) 2; La Fleuriere (P Trevor) 3; Konaseema (Akshay Kumar) 4. WB: 1-1/2, 4-3/4, 2-1/2. T: 1:25.65. Not Run: La Quintal; TB: Magan Singh; Fav: Feel The Magic.
7. Himayat Sagar Plate - 1400M: Wolf Creek (A Asbar) 1; Dali's Destiny (Kuldeep Singh) 2; Krystallos (P Ajeet Kumar) 3; China Town (P Trevor) 4. WB: 2-3/4, 3/4, Nk. TB: RH Sequeira; Fav: Dali's Destiny.
Bengaluru dividends
I race: Rs 18 w; 12, 13, 16 p; Fc Rs 48; Q: Rs 16; Shp: Rs 32; Thp: Rs 37; Tri: Rs 97 & 118; Exp: Rs 488 & 182.
II race: Rs 19 w; 16, 12, 11 p; Fc: Rs 42; Q: Rs 19; Shp: Rs 26; Thp Rs 38; Tri: Rs 56 & 41; Exp: Rs 420 & 346.
III race: Rs 16 w; 10, 10, 11 p; Fc: Rs 24; Q: Rs 15; Shp: Rs 24; Thp: Rs 24; Tri: Rs 38 & 29; Exp: Rs 820 & 778.
IV race: Rs 30 w; 12, 13, 21 p; Fc: Rs 73; Q: Rs 47; Shp: Rs 31; Thp: Rs 35; Tri: Rs 114 & 89; Exp: Rs 444 & 149.
V race: Rs 25 w; 10, 22, 10 p; Fc: 211; Q: Rs 100 ; Shp: Rs 61; Thp: Rs 37; Tri: Rs 199 & 91; Exp: Rs 6853.
VI race: Rs 27 w; 10, 17, 12 p; Fc: Rs 337; Q: Rs 275; Shp: Rs 44; Thp: Rs 50; Tri: Rs 608 & 175; Exp: Rs 1751 & 1126.
VII race: Rs 38 w; 18, 14, 41 p; Fc: Rs 156; Q: Rs 77; Shp: Rs 35; Thp: Rs 71; Tri: Rs 828 & 1314; Exp: Rs 2677 & 945.
Jackpot: Rs 3073 & 226. **I treble:** Rs. 113. **II treble:** Rs 614.

Eliminator wins main race

DELHI RESULTS
Eliminator, trained by Rajinder and ridden by Lave Kumar, won the Vijay Sprint Plate, the feature event of the races on Saturday.
1. Veer Gati Plate -- 1000M: Scarlett Tempest (K Narender) 1, Reback (Kundan Paswan) Jaadugar (Arjun) 3, Helicopter(Varun) 4. WB: 2, 5, 5; T: 1-02.40. TB: Irfan Ali; Fav: Scarlett Tempest.
2. Vijay Sprint Plate -- 1400M: Eliminator (Lave Kumar) 1, Galway Bay (Angad) 2, Lodge Keeper (R Rakesh) 3, The Panther (Shekhawat) 4. WB: Dist, 1/2, 2 1/2. T: 1-22.97. TB: Rajinder; Fav: Ashwa Vedha.
3. The Tez Raftaar Plate -- 1600M: Black Rainstorm (Lave Kumar) 1, Dubai Falcon (Vishal) 2, Cletus (M B Qureshi) 3, Heer (Jai Prakash) 4. WB: 1 1/2, 1 1/4, Nk. T: 1-41.38. TB: S M Abbas; Fav: Heer.
4. The Samrat Plate (Div-1) - 1100M: Robust (R Rakesh) 1, Big Daddy (Vishal) 2, Tequila (Aasif Khan) 3, Time To Win (Abdul Fazal) 4. WB: Shd, 1 3/4, 1 1/4. T: 1-6.47. TB: Magan Singh; Fav: Robust.
5. The Samrat Plate (Div-11) -- 1100M: Golden Sun (Aasif Khan) 1, Ashwa Manslu (Vivek G) 2, Rocket Rod (Shivam) 3, Rinku Romeo (Jai Prakash) 4. WB: Shd, 8 3/4, Hd. T: 1-5.20. TB : V S Parmer; Fav: Ashwa Manslu.
6. The Shaan-E-Race Plate -- 1000M: Trending Cruise (Arjun) 1, She's Beauty (Shivam) 2, Ticker (Faizan Khan) 3, Lemon Pie (Vishal) 4. WB: 1 1/2, 1, 2. T: 59.51. TB: Ajay Sharma; Fav: Trending Cruise.
Bengaluru dividends:
I race: Rs 10w; 10, 19p; Fc: Rs 29; Q: Rs 28; Shp: Rs 26; Thp: Rs 17; Tri: Rs 82 & 46.
II race: Rs 40w; 10, 12, 36p; Fav: Rs 323; Q: Rs 144; Shp: Rs 36; Thp: Rs 65; Tri: Rs 1,193 & 1,227; Exp: Rs 8,702 & 244.
III race: Rs 491w; 39, 15, 15, 45p; Fav: Rs 1,339; Q: 638; Shp: Rs 45; Thp: Rs 39; Tri: Rs 7,365 & C/F; Exp: Rs C/F.
IV race: Rs 19w; 10, 13, 19p; Fc: Rs 88; Q: Rs 35; Shp: 35; Thp: Rs 34; Tri: Rs 508 & 35; Exp: Rs 1,251 & 536.
V race: Rs 41w; 12, 10, 11p; Fc: Rs 106; Q: Rs 104; Shp: Rs 19; Thp: Rs 27; Tri: Rs 171 & 93; Exp: Rs 1,043 & 805.
VI race: 21w; 13, 10, 13p; Fc: Rs 100; Q: Rs 57; Shp: Rs 45; Thp: Rs 46; Tri : Rs 70 & 49; Exp: Rs 849 & 517.
Jackpot: Rs C/F;
Jackpot: 30% Rs 29,154.
Treble: Rs 1,479.

Trevor-ridden Social Butterfly for HRC Trophy

MUMBAI SELECTIONS
Social Butterfly, from the stables of D Todywalla and to be ridden by P Trevor, is fancied to win the HRC Trophy, the feature event of the races on Sunday. The first race starts at 4.00 pm
1. The Jockey Trophy - 1000M: Arbitrage 1, Rise The Stars 2, Between Friends 3.
2. The Owners' Trophy - 1600M: Rosario 1, Eagle Day 2. Tyrannus 3.
3. The Jimmy Bharucha Salver - 1400M: Jaandaar 1, Blue Jet 2, Storm Majesty 3.
4. The Racing Officials Trophy - 1400M: Juracan 1, Interceptor 2, Bravo Zulu 3.
5. The Dady Adenwalla Trophy - 1200M: Bravion 1, Pinnacle 2, Tempo 3.
6. The Hyderabad Race Club Trophy - 1200M: Social Butterfly 1, Market King 2, Credence 3.
7. The Trainers Trophy - 1200M: 1200M: Undercover 1, Absolute Gorgeous 2, Foujita 3.
8. The Sion F. Nessim Plate - 1200M: Mulan 1, Majesticus 2, Aeon Flux 3.
Day's best: Rosario.
Jackpot: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8.
I treble: 2, 3 & 4.
II treble: 5, 6 & 7.

ATHLETICS OPEN RELAY

Unnathi stars in India's national record show

Karnataka's U-20 quartets shine big with five medals

BENGALURU, DHNS

India B 4x100 mixed r relay team (from left) Lalu Prasad Bhoi, Unnati Aiyappa, Harita Bhadra and D Jayaram won the race with a new national record at the International Invitational Relay and National Open Relay Competitions in Chandigarh.

In an entertaining day on track and field, two Indian teams fought tooth and nail in a photo finish to set a new national record in mixed 4x100m relays at the International Invitational Relay and National Open Relay Competitions in Chandigarh on Saturday.

India B, featuring Karnataka's Unnathi Aiyappa, didn't just stun the India A team (42.34 seconds) by clocking 42.30 seconds to the top but also improved their world ranking to 19th with just a week left in the qualification period for the World Relay Championships in Botswana in May, which only includes the top 24 as per its ranking.

The rest of the members of the NR efforts were Lalu Prasad Bhoi, D Jayaram and Harita Bhadra.

India have also confirmed their World Relays qualification in the men's 4x400m relay as the quartet of Manu TS, Amoj Jacob, Rajesh Ramesh, Dharmveer Choudhary clocked 3.01.43 seconds to improve India's ranking to 15th.

India are in favourable positions in the women's 4x100m (World No. 22) and mixed 4x100 (No. 23) with the cut-off date set at April 5.

However, it was anti-climax for the runners in the men's 4x100m and women's 4x400m relays with India getting disqualified in the former heats due to a lange infringement by Karnataka's Manikanta Hoblidhar, who pulled a hamstring and stepped on the line.

The women's 4x400m relay team, featuring state's GK Vijayakumari and MR Poovamma, won the final by a margin at 3:32.81 but fell well short of the required timing of 3:31.37 or less to enter the top 24.

U-20 runners shine

Even if a gold remained elusive, it was a good outing for Karnataka's under-20 quartets as they picked up five medals -- two silvers and three bronze -- at the event.

The foursome of Sarvajeeth, Yashas D, Reehan Kumar and Ayush Devadiga clocked 42.03 seconds to finish second in the men's 4x100m race behind Tamil Nadu (41.58s).

The second silver came in the mixed 4x100m relay when Atheeq Ahamed, Srishti V, Hemanth Gowda MY and Lekhana S Prasad crossed the finish line in 45.69s to occupy the second position on the podium. Chandigarh (45.44s) took gold while Punjab (45.92s) claimed the bronze.

Results: Relays: Men: 4x100m: Odisha 40.47, 1; Tamil Nadu 40.51, 2; Jharkhand 41.10, 3.
4x400m: India A (Manu TS, Amoj Jacob, Rajesh, Dharmveer Choudhary) 3:01.43, 1; Sri Lanka A 3:02.16, 2; Tamil Nadu 3:07.59, 3.
U-20: 4x100m: Tamil Nadu 41.58, 1; Karnataka (Sarvajeeth, Yashas D, Reehan Kumar, Ayush Devadiga) 42.03, Odisha 42.08, 3.
4x400m: Tamil Nadu 3:30.88, 1; Punjab (3:32.54), 2; Gujarat 3:43.76, 3.
Women: 4x100m: India A (Nithya Gandhe, Daneshwari AT, Sudehsna Shivankar, Tamanna) 44.18, 1; Reliance 45.52, 2; Tamil Nadu 46.78, 3.
4x400m: India A (R Vithya Ramraj, Poovamma MR, Rashdeep Kaur, Vijayakumari GK) 3:32.81, 1; Sri Lanka A 3:36.94, 2; JSW 3:42.28, 3.
U-20: 4x100m: Tamil Nadu 48.38, 1; Gujarat 49.60, 2; Karnataka (Siri N, S Karkada, Akshaya Shekar, Lekhana S Prasad) 50.13, 3.
4x400m: Tamil Nadu 3:46.73, 1; Punjab 3:53.75, 2; Karnataka (Akshaya Shekar, Sonal D Mello, Sharika V, Isha Renjith) 4:16.77, 3.
Mixed: 4x100m: India B (Lalu Prasad Bhoi, Unnathi Aiyyapa, D Jayaram, Harita Bhadra) NR: 42.30, 1; India A (Gurindervir Singh, Sudeshna Shivankar, Tamil Arasu, Tamana) 42.34, 2, Maldives 44.43, 3.
4x400m: India A (Vishal TK, Ansa Babu, Nihal Joel, Saloni Nagar) 3:18.90, 1; Sri Lanka 3:19.58, 2; JSW 3:23.56, 3.
U-20: 4x100m: Chandigarh 45.44, 1; Karnataka (Atheeq Ahamed, Srishti V, Hemanth Gowda MY, Lekhana S Prasad) 45.69, 2; Punjab 45.92, 3.

Praggnanandhaa braces for tough test

PAPHOS (CYPRUS), PTI

R Praggnanandhaa

Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa, India's sole representative in the Open section of the eight-player elite field, faces a challenging task as the Candidates Tournament gets underway here on Sunday.

The event, which will determine over the course of a fortnight the challenger to reigning world champion D Gukesh in the next World Championship match later this year, will feature eight players competing in a double round-robin format.

Each player will face every other participant twice, and the one with the highest total points will earn the right to compete for the world title.

USA's Fabiano Caruana appears to be the favourite, ahead of compatriot Hikaru Nakamura, who qualified through his rating. Dutch Grandmaster Anish Giri has also been in good form and is one to watch; if he gets going, he will be a formidable contender.

Wei Yi of China, Javokhir Sindarov of Uzbekistan, Andrey Esipenko, and Matthias Bluebaum are the other four players in what is likely to be one of the most keenly contested and widely followed tournaments of the year.

In the women's section, former women's world champion Tan Zhongyi of China has an edge over others but things could get tricky here as well.

Following the withdrawal of two-time world rapid champion Koneru Humpy due to security concerns, Anna Muzychuk -- last year's Norway Chess winner -- has replaced the Indian. However, all eyes will be on Divya Deshmukh, who won the Women's World Cup in 2025 and the other Indian in fray R Vaishali.

Siddhanth bags two bronze medals

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka paddler M Siddhanth bagged bronze in both under-13 singles and doubles categories in the 87th Sub-junior and Cadet National Table Tennis Championships held at Gandhidham in Gujarat.

M Siddhanth (left) and M Satwik with their spoils.

Siddhanth lost the singles semifinals to Ariv 7-11, 15-13, 8-11, 13-11, 11-6.

In the U-13 doubles semifinal event, Siddanth and M Satwik were handed a five-game (11-6, 7-11, 11-7, 10-12, 11-5) defeat by Pune's Vohra Trijal and Sharma Satwik.
Results: U-13: Boys: Singles semifinal: Arivbt M Siddhanth 7-11, 15-13, 8-11, 13-11, 11-6.
U-13: Doubles semifinal: Vohra Trijal (Pun)/Sharma Satwik (Pun) bt M Siddanth (Kar)/ M Satwik (Kar) 11-6, 7-11, 11-7, 10-12, 11-5.

Karnataka bag 15 swimming gold medals

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka signed off the swimming competition with 15 gold, five silver and three bronze medals at the inaugural Khelo India Tribal Games on Saturday.

Karnataka's Manikanta L topped the chart with eight golds and one silver while Dhoneesh M finished with five golds and one silver medal.

In the women's section Karnataka's Meghanjali bagged four golds and two bronze medals.

Karnataka topped the medals tally with 15 gold six silver and three bronze while Odisha are second with seven gold, three silver and 10 bronze medals.

Hosts Chhattisgarh are seventh with eight medals (one gold, four silver and three bronze).

Weightlifter Nikita ended hosts Chhattisgarh's wait for a gold medal while Odisha's women swimmers clinched all the three yellow metals on offer.

Nikita dominated the women's 77kg weightlifting event to comfortably win the gold medal in the last event of the day while Odisha won gold through Ritika Minz (100m freestyle), Anjali Munda (50m Backstroke) and 4x100 medley relay team. Anjali finished with five golds, four of them in individual races.

India top group despite draw

MALE, PTI: The Indian U20 men's team finished as Group B toppers after playing out a 1-1 draw against Bangladesh in their second match of the SAFF U20 Championship 2026 here on Saturday.

Vishal Yadav handed the Blue Colts the lead in the 17th minute, but Bangladesh struck deep into first-half stoppage time through Md Abdul Riyad Fahim (45+10) to ensure the points were shared.

The result was enough for India to stay on top of the group, having already secured semis berth.

Eugenio Chacarra

Chacarra extends lead, Om Prakash best-placed Indian

BENGALURU/GURUGRAM, DHNS/PTI: A round of 18 holes at the DLF Golf and Country Club, particularly under the intense scrutiny of a Sunday finale, can go anyway. The outcome will be known tomorrow afternoon, but as things stand at the Hero Indian Open, Spaniard Eugenio Chacarra stands on the cusp of a title double.

Sitting over a seemingly useful four-shot lead at 10-under over South African MJ Daffue and England' Alex Fitzpatrick, Chacarra can pause, choose to dwell on this rare stat after the two-under 70.

At the completion of round two, three Indians made the halfway cut of four-over 148.

The trio included Om Prakash Chouhan (tied 21 st at even-par 144), teenager Manoj S (tied 38th at two-over 146) and Kshitij Naveed Kaul (tied 57th at four-over 148).

IPL 2026

10 TEAMS 13 VENUES 58 DAYS 74 MATCHES

> That is a core group that we built over many years (and) that is a benefit we reap from that. The contribution that Rohit, Surya bring in, and every other cricketer is massive
>
> **MAHELA JAYAWARDENE**
> MI head coach

Champs RCB set the ball rolling

Duffy, Padikkal & Kohli shine in hosts' 6-wicket win over SRH

SIDNEY KIRAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Having waited patiently for ten months for high-profile cricket, the cricket-loving Bengaluru faithful were handed a deserving reunion gift by local boy Devdutt Padikkal and the talismanic Virat Kohli as defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru made a smashing start to their title defence in IPL-19 here on Saturday.

Padikkal, who was in wonderful form for Karnataka across formats in the domestic season that concluded last month, picked up from where he left off by scoring a blistering 61 off 26 balls (7x4, 4x6), while Kohli hammered a measured 69 not out off 38 balls (5x4, 5x6) to anchor RCB to a resounding 6-wicket win over Sunrisers Hyderabad in a high-speed chase at sold-out M Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Joining forces as early as the second over after Phil Salt perished in pursuit of a competitive 202-run target, both Padikkal and Kohli took the game away from the Sunrisers with their scorching 101-run partnership off 45 balls. It was the young Padikkal who played the role of the aggressor first before Kohli joined the party slowly but assuredly later on.

From the moment he strode to the crease, the 25-year-old Padikkal, playing as Impact Player, meant business. He flicked the first ball he faced off Jaydev Unadkat for a six and from that moment on, the southpaw didn't look back as he batted in top gear right until his exit in the night over. Seeing the small white ball like a football, Padikkal stepped down on numerous occasions to tonk pacers Nitish Kumar Reddy, David Payne, and even the seasoned Unadkat for boundaries.

Padikkal also used the crease superbly. When the pacers shortened the length to stop him from stepping down, he gave himself room to cut them effortlessly. There were a few pull shots too, the fans lapping up every bit of entertainment from the newly-installed Karnataka captain.

Watching Padikkal bat at the other end, the confidence started to rub onto Kohli also. The veteran, who calls the Chinnaswamy his second home and has played some stellar knocks here, played some gorgeous shots off his own to show his powers are still very much intact despite retiring from two formats internationally. Some of the shots were breathtaking to say the least, like the lofted straight drive six off Eshan Malinga and a flicked flat and powerful six off Harshal Patel. Both the shots had the trademark powerful Kohli wrist written all over it.

Padikkal departed in the ninth over but Kohli stood firm even after that. A master of many a chase for club and country, Kohli nicely picked the right balls to play the big shots to smoothly guide Royal Challengers home in the season opener.

Earlier, pacer Jacob Duffy impressed with the ball, picking up 4-0-22-3 in his first spell to rock the Sunrisers. A brilliant 80 off 38 balls from captain Ishan Kishan and a 43 off 18 balls from No. 7 Aniket Verma powered the visitors to 201/9, which proved inadequate.

After Jacob Duffy's (right) impressive haul of 3/22, Devdutt Padikkal scored a 26-ball 61 to help RCB win the IPL-19 season opener against SRH at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on Saturday. DH PHOTO/ PUSHKAR V

SCOREBOARD

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD: Travis Head c Salt b Duffy 11 (9b, 2x4), Abhishek Sharma c Jitesh b Duffy 7 (8b, 1x6), Ishan Kishan c Salt b Abhinandan 80 (38b, 8x4, 5x6), Nitish Kumar Reddy c Abhinandan b Duffy 1 (6b), Heinrich Klaasen c Salt b Shepherd 31 (22b, 2x4, 1x6), Salil Arora c Padikkal b Suyash 9 (6b, 1x6), Aniket Verma c Kohli b Shepherd 43 (18b, 3x4, 4x6), Harsh Dubey c Padikkal b Shepherd 3 (3b), Harshal Patel c Padikkal b Bhuvneshwar 0 (2b), David Payne (not out) 6 (5b), Jaydev Unadkat (not out 4 (3b). Extras (LB-2, W-4) 6. **TOTAL (for 9 wkts, 20 overs) 201.**

Fall of wickets: 1-18 (Abhishek), 2-23 (Head), 3-29 (Nitish), 4-126 (Klaasen), 5-137 (Arora), 6-155 (Kishan), 7-167 (Dubey), 8-174 (Harshal), 9-192 (Verma).

Bowling: Jacob Duffy 4-0-22-3 (w-1), Bhuvneshwar Kumar 4-0-31-1 (w-2), Abhinandan Singh 3-0-38-1, Romario Shepherd 4-0-54-3 (w-1), Suyash Sharma 3-0-28-1, Krunal Pandya 2-0-26-0.

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BENGALURU: Phil Salt c Klaasen b Unadkat 8 (7b), Virat Kohli (not out) 69 (38b, 5x4, 5x6), Devdutt Padikkal c Klaasen b Dubey 61 (26b, 7x4, 4x6), Rajat Patidar c Dubey b Payne 31 (12b, 2x4, 3x6), Jitesh Sharma c Unadkat b Payne 0 (1b), Tim David (not out) 16 (10b, 1x4, 1x6). Extras (B-8, LB-3, W-7) 18. **TOTAL (for 4 wkts, 15.4 overs) 203.**

Fall of wickets: 1-9 (Salt), 2-110 (Padikkal), 3-163 (Patidar), 4-163 (Jitesh).

Bowling: Nitish Kumar Reddy 2-0-19-0, Jaydev Unadkat 3-0-29-1 (w-1), David Payne 3-0-35-2 (w-1), Harsh Dubey 3-0-35-1, Eshan Malinga 2-0-35-0 (w-4), Harshal Patel 2.4-0-39-0 (w-1).

Result: RCB won by 6 wkts

PoM: Jacob Duffy. **RCB's next match:** Vs CSK (April 5, Bengaluru).

Dhoni set to miss first two weeks due to calf strain

NEW DELHI, PTI: Chennai Super Kings icon MS Dhoni is set to miss the first two weeks of the IPL due to a calf injury, the franchise said on Saturday.

"MS Dhoni is currently undergoing rehabilitation for a calf strain. As a result, he is likely to miss the first two weeks of TATA IPL 2026," said CSK in a statement.

Dhoni has continued playing the IPL ever since retiring from international cricket in 2020.

The 44-year-old's future in the IPL becomes a topic of intense discussion following CSK's campaign every season. Considering Dhoni only plays the IPL, it becomes tougher to maintain match fitness.

Though Ruturaj Gaikwad is the captain of the side, Dhoni is the de facto leader of the franchise having stayed with them since 2008 barring the time they were suspended from the competition.

Dhoni played 14 games in the previous IPL and batted lower down the order to provide the final flourish to the innings. He has also had to deal with recurring knee issues since his international retirement and underwent a surgery in 2023.

CSK open their IPL 2026 campaign against Rajasthan Royals in Guwahati on March 30.

Mitchell Starc

'Individuals have provided heavily misinformed opinions'

NEW DELHI, PTI: Mitchell Starc has lashed out at critics over his delayed arrival for IPL 2026, asserting that his absence at the start of the season is due to injury management and not due to a lack of commitment to Delhi Capitals as some "heavily misinformed" opinions suggested.

The left-arm pacer is yet to arrive in India and will miss Delhi Capitals' opening matches, sparking debate around overseas players' commitment to their franchises.

Breaking his silence on the growing criticism, Starc said in a statement on Saturday, "Despite the opinions and views of certain individuals with their platforms in and through the Indian media, I'm currently rehabbing and managing an injury in my shoulder and elbow of which I didn't know the extent of during the Australian summer."

"These individuals have made some strong statements around involvement in the IPL and provided heavily misinformed opinions of players, preached them as facts, and claim to know my body better than me."

The 36-year-old, who grabbed 14 wickets last IPL season, though "apologised" to his franchise for his unavailability in the beginning of the league this year while also pledging his commitment to the side which spent Rs 11.75 crore during the 2025 auction to get the Australian pacer's services.

"... With that said I do acknowledge this injury setback and timing is disruptive to the Delhi team and I apologise for that and to the fans for not being available for the early part of this season.

I remain committed to join DC, are in continual communication updating the team."

Stokes sidelined after gruesome facial injury

LONDON, AFP: England Test captain Ben Stokes will be sidelined for the first month of the county season as he recovers from facial injuries sustained in a training accident.

Stokes suffered a broken cheekbone after being hit by the ball during a net session with his Durham teammates last month.

The 34-year-old said that his subsequent surgery was a success, although his photo on Instagram, showing a badly swollen and bruised face, revealed the extent of the horror injury.

The prolonged rehabilitation process means that Stokes has had to delay his return to action.

The all-rounder, who has not played since the final game of England's Ashes series thrashing in Australia in January, was originally hoping to make his comeback against Kent in Durham's first round of County Championship fixtures next week.

But he now looks likely to sit out the first four matches of the domestic campaign before preparing for the New Zealand Test series by facing Worcestershire and Kent in May.

"He was going to play the first game, he's been training so hard to be ready. But he won't play in that, obviously. We have to wait for the specialists to clear him," Durham coach Ryan Campbell said.

"Unfortunately, it's made a change, the accidental bump. He is pencilled in for Worcester and Kent and I think it will just be those two, to be honest.

"He has got to recover from the facial injuries and then have to build up again. It is a long old summer and he will have that mapped out but is keen and ready to go."

REMEMBRANCE

KSCA reserved 11 seats in memory of Royal Challengers Bengaluru supporters, who lost their lives in last year's tragic stampede during the team's maiden title celebrations, at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

MI seek strong start vs KKR

MUMBAI, PTI

A robust Mumbai Indians' outfit will begin their bid to end a five-year title drought in the Indian Premier League when they take on a depleted Kolkata Knight Riders in their tournament opener here on Sunday.

It has been a while since Mumbai Indians, the joint most successful team in the IPL, laid their hands on a trophy which they claimed five times between 2013-2020.

Last year, the Hardik Pandya-led side finished third after losing to runners-up Punjab Kings in the Qualifier 2 but Mumbai Indians will feel they have all bases covered to have a crack at what would be a record-extending sixth title win this year.

A new-look Rohit Sharma will be keen to be back among runs while Mumbai Indians' all-round strength makes them a side to beat in the tournament once again. It includes a heavy chunk of India's T20 World Cup winning squad in skipper Suryakumar Yadav, Pandya, Tilak Varma and Jasprit Bumrah.

MI's rich overseas talent bench consists of another wicketkeeper-batter option in Ryan Rickelton, Sherfane Rutherford, Corbin Bosch, New Zealand skipper Mitchell Santner, Will Jacks, AM Ghazanfar and even Trent Boult, who is will be expected to team up with Bumrah.

In Shardul Thakur and Deepak Chahar, MI have two seasoned Indian operators while Naman Dhir could once again continue playing the role of a finisher which he executed with a lot of success last year.

The challenge, thus, will not only be to find the right playing combination and utilise that Impact Player rule to their benefit but also to notch up a few wins at the start which gives them a momentum, as IPL's perennial slow-starters Mumbai Indians are notorious on this aspect.

The visitors Kolkata Knight Riders carry some local flavour in skipper Ajinkya Rahane and the young Angkrish Raghuvanshi to Mumbai but they have some pertinent questions to answer even before the first ball has begun.

Rohit Sharma

LIVE 7:30 PM, STAR SPORTS NETWORK

PBKS' Vyshak embracing Impact Player role

I might get the ball anytime and I have to be ready, says Karnataka pacer

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

Bowling at the death is among the toughest jobs in T20 cricket, but for Punjab Kings pacer Vyshak Vijaykumar, operating at one of the most crucial junctures of the game is an "opportunity" and a "great challenge".

While the Karnataka man might not be guaranteed a start in a PBKS side that looks to outbat their opposition, he is likely to be summoned as an Impact Player, a ploy they used last year.

"I really enjoy bowling at the death and I've been doing it all along," Vyshak told *DH* in an interaction arranged by Punjab Kings.

"So if there is another opportunity, then I will take it as a good opportunity rather than taking pressure."

PBKS are set to kick off their campaign against Gujarat Titans on March 31 and Vyshak threw light on the conversations with the coaches in the pre-season camp.

"As soon as I joined the camp, the coaches spoke about my role in this team. It is simple and similar to what happened last year. I might get the ball anytime in the 20 overs and I just have to be ready. That is the mindset."

Punjab Kings' Vyshak Vijaykumar is likely to be used as an Impact Player by the Ricky Ponting-led think tank. PBKS

With the hurried and unknown nature of an Impact Player, clarity about his role has been paramount for Vyshak in implementing his plans.

"Whatever challenges or decisions we take, if we don't have clarity, it doesn't go well. That's how I see it. If I'm clear about what I'm supposed to do, that is where most of the results are in my favour. And for me, it is about being clear and being given that clarity of plan no matter the result."

Vyshak also credited India pacer Mohammed Siraj's pep talk during his time in Royal Challengers Bengaluru for the change in his attitude and approach towards bowling in white-ball cricket.

"I had done well in the first game and suddenly in the next, I went for a lot of runs. And I was like, what is happening? That is when Siraj came and said that no matter what happens in life, you will have to remain constant and have your emotions in control. That was one of the best pieces of advice for a fast bowler. I have been following that."

Having gone down to Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the 2025 final by six runs, Vyshak hopes PBKS could exact a "sweet revenge" and feels there would be a no better place than the M Chinnaswamy stadium.

"We have spoken about it. We have visualised it. I'm pretty sure we're going to do that (winning the IPL). And nothing like coming to Bangalore and doing it. If we can play against RCB and win the trophy, nothing like it as it will be a sweet revenge."

RCB fan's 'fantasy' comes true

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka's Shubham Agarwal, who finished second globally in the official Indian Premier League Fantasy League in June last year from among 4.4 lakh participants, attended the BCCI Captains' Day event for this year's Indian Premier League recently in Mumbai.

Shubham Agarwal

Besides winning a Royal Enfield bike, Shubham also received a memorabilia autographed by the entire team champions RCB.

An alumnus of NITK Surathkal and IIM Bangalore, Shubham also got to pose with all 10 IPL captains alongside the IPL-2026 trophy.

Woods charged with DUI

MIAMI, AFP: Tiger Woods was arrested and charged with driving under the influence Friday after a rollover crash near his Florida home, authorities said, as the 15-time major champion's golf career veered into fresh turmoil.

Woods escaped injury but was detained after his vehicle clipped a truck while attempting to overtake on a residential road on Jupiter Island, flipping onto its side.

Sinner a step closer to 'Sunshine Double'

MIAMI, AFP

World number two Jannik Sinner of Italy stretched his win streak over fourth-ranked Alexander Zverev to seven matches on Friday, advancing to a Miami Open men's final against Czech Jiri Lehecka.

The 24-year-old Italian fired 15 aces in beating Germany's Zverev 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) after an hour and 53 minutes -- boosting his streak of consecutive sets won at the elite Masters 1000 level to 32. Sinner is trying to become the first man since Roger Federer in 2017 to complete the "Sunshine Double" by winning titles at Indian Wells and Miami in the same year.

Lehecka dominated 28th-seeded Arthur Fils of France 6-2, 6-2 in the other semifinal at Hard Rock Stadium, home of the NFL's Miami Dolphins.

Lehecka is winless in three matches against Sinner without taking a set. Sinner blasted a forehand winner to break Zverev for a 3-1 lead and held from there to capture the first set after 42 minutes on a service winner.

Jiri Lehecka. AFP

Djokovic pulls out

Novak Djokovic has pulled out of the Monte Carlo Masters after having skipped the Miami Open with a right shoulder injury.

"We send him our best wishes," wrote the tournament.

Antonelli leads Mercedes 1-2

SUZUKA (JAPAN), AFP

Kimi Antonelli took pole position for the Japanese Grand Prix ahead of Mercedes team-mate George Russell on Saturday as Max Verstappen suffered another qualifying nightmare.

Mercedes have claimed one-two finishes at both grands prix so far in a flying start to the Formula One season and they were again dominant in dry conditions at Suzuka. The 19-year-old Italian Antonelli became the youngest pole-sitter in F1 history two weeks ago in China and he made it two in a row with a fastest lap of 1:28.778.

Kimi Antonelli

Early championship leader Russell was second, 0.298s behind, with McLaren's Oscar Piastri third and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc fourth. Antonelli, who won the first grand prix of his F1 career in China two weeks ago, said it was "a really clean session".

"There's still work to do in these big tracks with the energy, how to find a solution that allows us to push even more and drive without thinking too much," he said.

"But overall I think it was good fun."

Russell was fastest in Friday's first practice.

THAT BLIND RHODES SCHOLAR

Rahul Bajaj
is a practising lawyer with expertise in disability rights and IP law, and is co-founder of Mission Accessibility. He wears more hats than he can himself sometimes count
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When State stamps identity: The quiet erosion of trans rights

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Act, 2026, recently passed by the Parliament, departs sharply from the constitutional principles laid down by the Supreme Court and risks undoing hard-won gains.

The starting point for any legal discussion on transgender rights in India must remain the landmark Supreme Court judgment in *National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India (2014)*. The Court was unequivocal: gender identity lies at the heart of personal autonomy and dignity, and it is to be determined by self-identification – not by medical procedures or state approval. As the Court observed, "gender identity... forms the core of one's personal self, based on self-identification, not on surgical or medical procedure." It further recognised that this internal sense of self "may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth," and that no citizen can be discriminated against on this ground. In other words, the Constitution protects the right to *be*, not merely the right to *prove*.

The 2026 amendment moves in the opposite direction. It introduces a medical board – an "authority" – as a gatekeeper in the process of legal recognition. This is a fundamental shift. Where the 2019 law (imperfect as it was) at least acknowledged self-perceived identity, the amendment conditions recognition on institutional validation. This is not a minor procedural tweak; it transforms a right into a permission. The removal of the explicit statutory guarantee of "self-perceived gender identity" further entrenches this shift, effectively erasing the legislative reflection of NALSA. The 2020 Transgender Rules were at pains to underscore that no medical or physical verification would be required as a precondition to the issuance of a certificate of identity. Contrary to this, the 2026 amendment makes it mandatory for District Magistrates to consider the recommendation of a medical board as a precondition to the issuance of a certificate of identity. Worse still, it empowers the Magistrate to consult more medical experts.

There is a deeper pattern here, one that resonates beyond gender identity. Persons with disabilities in India are all too familiar with the burden of repeatedly proving their status through intrusive and frequent assessments. Certification regimes, instead of facilitating access, often become tools of exclusion. Persons with disabilities are frequently penalised because different medical boards adopt different approaches, resulting in the same person receiving different disability percentages despite no change in their medical condition. This has real-life consequences for the individual's educational and employment prospects, as well as their access to legal protections.

The argument that is most often cited to justify such measures is the possibility of misuse. At present, the 2019 Transgender Persons Act gives such persons the same rights that the rest of society takes for granted – inclusive education, non-discriminatory workplaces, and access to public spaces. One is at a loss to understand what misuse of these basic rights is likely to occur by virtue of a medically untested self-identification of transgender identity.

Even assuming that misuse is a genuine concern, in the disability context, the Supreme Court has aptly addressed the flawed logic underlying legal moves that make an entire community suffer just because there may be some black sheep. In *Vikash Kumar v. Union Public Service Commission*, the issue was whether persons with disabilities without a benchmark disability could access a scribe in examinations. One argument raised against this facility was the possibility of misuse. The Court rejected this reasoning: the mere possibility of misuse cannot justify denying a benefit to an entire class. If a candidate cheats, you punish the candidate – you do not impose such onerous conditions on everyone that the examination itself becomes inaccessible. The Court offered a vivid analogy: we do not require all students to wear uncomfortable clothing when they come for exams just because some of them might conceal chits in their clothes. Rather, those who cheat are duly punished.

Furthermore, the existing legal framework already contemplates procedural safeguards, such as certification processes under the 2019 Act, which are backed by an affidavit. The question is: does the State believe its own authorities are incapable of administering these safeguards? If not, why impose additional layers of scrutiny that undermine dignity and autonomy?

This amendment reflects a mistrust of self-identification. It replaces a rights-based framework with a regulatory one, where identity is mediated through medical and bureaucratic approval. The promise of NALSA was simple yet profound: that every individual has the right to define their own identity. Any law that dilutes this promise does not merely fall short; it moves us backwards. India can either build on the transformative vision of its constitutional jurisprudence or retreat into paternalistic control. The 2026 amendment, in its current form, chooses the latter. It may still not be too late to correct course.

INSCRUTABLE CHINA

Beijing's big bet on self-reliance

On March 12, China firmed up its roadmap for a changing world order by introducing its 15th Five-Year Plan (FYP), which is set to be completed by 2030. In light of the intensifying strategic competition with the United States, Beijing is trying to rejig its domestic sector towards technological self-reliance and enhancing domestic demand. A marked shift is its great-power ambition, reflected in its slogan of "leading" the global order, compared to its previous agenda of active participation in globalisation.

Beijing is taking a cue from the loss of the Panama Canal projects, energy contracts in Venezuela, and disruptions in Ukraine and Iran, by domestic balancing efforts. Even though the country had lowered annual economic growth rates to about 4.5-5%, it is preparing for long-term strategic competition with the US by first reducing external vulnerabilities and by enhancing "new quality productive forces".

As with the 2022 Communist Party Congress, which focused on national security, the 15th FYP underlines preparedness for "high winds and rough waves" as "geopolitical conflict [became] more frequent". China has called for the protection of its "overseas interests" and steps to counter Western sanctions and "long-arm jurisdiction". Where the FYP talks about striking the Taiwan independence "separatist forces", there is a clear tilt towards geo-political and security issues in an otherwise economy-focused roadmap. Ironically, Taiwan supported China's semiconductor and other advanced technologies over the past few decades.

The FYP's focus, generally, is on short- to medium-range preparation in the economic and, more recently, technological fronts. China's centralised party-State has relied on the FYPs for redirection of capital and resources to different parts of the country and to different sectors. Given the power competition with the US, and set against local debt, ageing, and real estate worries, the country is redirecting its resources towards ten core new industries, including drones, quantum technology, embodied AI, brain-computer interfaces, 6G, and semiconductors.

Since China opened up its market to the US, Europe, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan from the late 1970s, it has absorbed technologies and investments. While becoming acutely dependent on foreign critical technologies, it reports more than 72% of the global EV production, and holds more than half of the global steel, cement, and aluminium products. An unintended consequence of this approach has been the dumping of such overcapacities in markets abroad, often with heavy State subsidies. The world needs to brace for such trade surpluses.

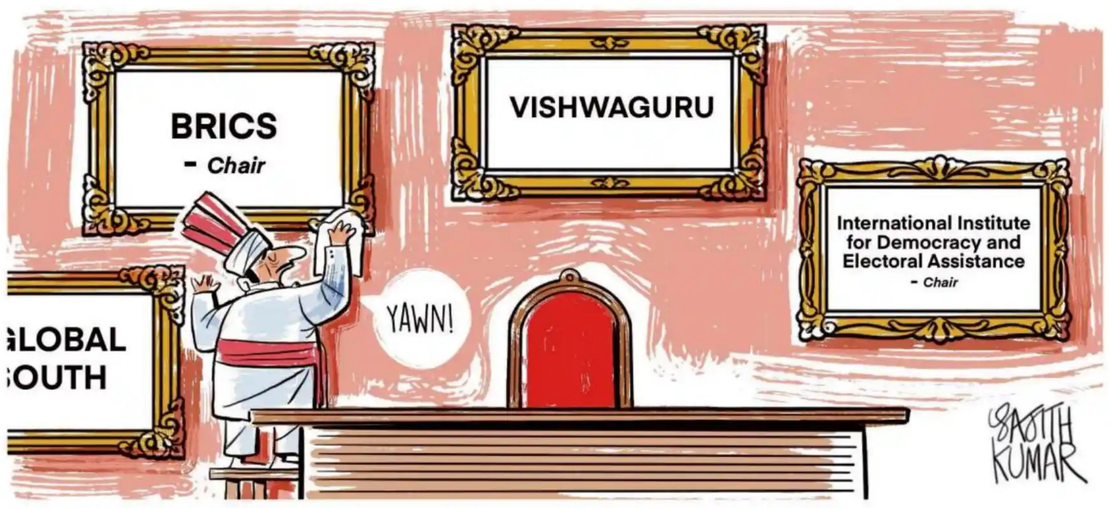
Srikanth Kondapalli
the JNU Prof has been Peking behind the Bamboo Curtain for 30 years
@Sri_Kondapalli

The current FYP demands a "whole of nation" approach to reduce dependence on external sources for such technologies, while calling for self-reliance. However, it would be incorrect to view this approach as going back to the Mao-era import-substitution policies, as China is still dependent on the world markets for exports. The leadership is preparing the country to resist sanctions and tariffs.

The FYP's targets for 2030 are audacious, but when compared to the previous plan, are incremental in nature. For instance, China wants to raise its digital economy's value addition to 12.5% of the GDP, increase its R&D spending by 7%, and reduce carbon intensity by 17%, while increasing renewable sources of energy by a quarter, by 2030. These are marginal increases compared to the 14th FYP targets. Even though China has remained the world's manufacturing hub for the past 16 years, it now intends to accelerate technological breakthroughs through innovation, as its total factor productivity has declined from 3.5% two decades ago to about 1.5%.

The current FYP reflects the ever-increasing demands of the party-State from the Chinese society, which has consistently faced turmoil over the past seven decades. Such demands are straining the social fabric, with the urban youth unemployment now estimated at 41%. The discontent is reflected in a generation that is not convinced of, and hence decries, the party-State vision. The call for long working hours is also sapping the energies of a generation that is inclined to exhibit its dissatisfaction through a slowdown.

Also, for an economy of nearly $20 trillion, domestic consumption is only above $7 trillion, less than 40% of the GDP, while global averages are around 60%. This lends context to the slogan for "vigorously boosting consumption". In the 14th FYP, China was positioned to shift from an export-oriented economy towards one driven by domestic consumption – this was aimed to ensure sustainable development. The vision, extended to the current plan, is credible but will continue to be tested by weak consumption, caused by a host of structural issues.



THIS AND THAT

IPL tickets and the hypocrisy over 'freebies'

When schoolboys play cricket on the streets, LBWs are the most contested umpiring decisions. The moment the ball hits the batsman's leg and the appeal is uproarious, the umpire lifts his finger to signal an out. But if the batting team shouts louder, the umpire wiggles his finger sideways to suggest he meant not out.

A similar comedy has been playing out these past two days, since legislators in the Karnataka Assembly unanimously demanded free tickets to the IPL matches that began on Saturday. In just a day, the MLAs wrangled two tickets each, with a promise of more. You can be sure they will wave triumphantly at you, sitting cosily in Chinnaswamy Stadium in their linens, when the camera zooms in on them during the matches.

Since the advent of the Aam Aadmi Party, which introduced free bus travel for women in Delhi, the term 'freebies' has come into vogue and dominated political debates. What you would in the past call welfare schemes are now condemned as populist giveaways that ruin state finances and encourage laziness. The BJP has been the most dismissive of *revdi*s, as it calls the 'freebies', although, in recent years, it has adopted an election pitch inspired by the AAP in Delhi and the Congress in Karnataka. Clearly, in Bihar, the pitch worked for the BJP and helped it take the reins of power.

The demand for free IPL tickets is a telling metaphor for how politicians benefit from the government's generosity to organisations such as the Karnataka State Cricket Association. R Ashoka, who spearheaded the campaign for IPL tickets, argued that the cricket administrators should provide free tickets for legislators: "We have given them land for a monthly rent of just Rs 1,600." This is, in effect, a brazen admission that legislators get freebies and personal privileges in lieu of government property they hand out to private and quasi-private parties. And his party has gone to town shaming citizens who benefit from 'guarantees', alleging that they hinder national progress!

Few stop to ask whether 'freebies' are free at all. Why are so many outraged when tax money, collected from citizens, is returned to them in the form of services? Siddaramaiah, Nitish Kumar, and Kejriwal are not handing over their individual or family wealth for you to feel embarrassed about a bus ride funded by your own tax money.

S R RAMAKRISHNA
often sees high art in kitsch and vice versa

If women should buy bus tickets to take them to work and back, why can't legislators pay for IPL tickets, a luxury rather than a necessity? And if it is so difficult for lawmakers to buy tickets for IPL matches, shouldn't they spare a thought for the less affluent cricket buffs and demand lower rates? If indeed the tickets are being sold in black, as Congress MLA Vijayanand Kashappanavar has alleged, shouldn't the people's representatives crack the whip against the black-marketeers? If Rs 1,600 is a ridiculously low rent for the land they have leased out to the cricket association, who is stopping them from collecting a fair market rate? Neither the cricket administrators nor the legislators are impoverished, and it would be amusing, if it weren't farcical, to watch them squabbling over free tickets.

And the entitlement does not stop at the tickets. MLA Kashappanavar demanded a separate VIP enclosure for legislators, declaring that "people's representatives" do not feel comfortable mixing with common citizens. To suggest that ordinary fans are somehow beneath the dignity of an elected representative is a bizarre twist in a system that calls itself democratic.

It may surprise critics of 'freebies' that some of the richest European nations treat public services as a right, not a dole. In Germany, Sweden, France, and the UK, citizens enjoy heavily subsidised – and in many cases entirely free – bus and train travel. Students, seniors, and low-income groups get special concessions.

The legislators' demand for free tickets has embarrassed some leaders. Within the BJP, MLA Suresh Kumar and MP Tejasvi Surya have spoken out against the demand. You can be sure not many of their colleagues will send back the VIP tickets that will arrive at their doors. And don't expect them to pay any heed to the fan outrage.

The outrage is real, though. Faced with a backlash, Ashoka is now saying he asked for tickets not for himself but for cricketers and cricket buffs in his constituency. He is wiggling his finger to backtrack after taking a wrong call. Now, it would be funny if it weren't so hypocritical.

KNOWN UNKNOWNS

The 1/100th company

Can a company that employs ten thousand people today operate with just a hundred tomorrow? Not across every sector, and not immediately. But in several industries, this is no longer a speculative question. It is an emerging trajectory.

A recent personal experience brought this into sharper focus. Working with Claude on coding and reasoning tasks, I found myself pausing more than once. The system was not merely assisting. It was structuring problems, proposing approaches, and iterating with a level of coherence that suggested something more than incremental progress. It felt like a shift to a higher gear in the AI journey.

If such capabilities continue to evolve, the implications for organisations are significant. Firms have historically scaled up to meet the growing demand for peoples' skills like coding. Also, bringing people together, aligning them, managing workflows, and ensuring accountability required layers of management. That logic may be changing. As coding becomes automated and coordination becomes computational, the need for large numbers of people begins to diminish.

This does not mean that organisations will disappear. It does mean that many of them may shrink. In information-heavy sectors such as software, media, analytics, and parts of finance, a small team augmented by AI systems could deliver what once required entire departments. The "1/100th company" is not a fantasy. It is a design possibility.

The timeline is not immediate. In physical sectors such as healthcare and infrastructure, human presence and safety accountability will remain essential. But over the next decade, even these sectors will experience a compression of workforce in areas where decision-making, monitoring, and optimisation can be automated.

This shift will not be limited to organisations. It will reshape work itself. The familiar structure of the eight-hour workday and five-day work week is unlikely to hold in its current form. It was built for a world where output scaled with the time spent. In an AI-augmented environment, output scales with leverage. A few hours of well-directed work may achieve what previously required days. The constraint will no longer be time. It will be clarity of thought and quality of inputs.

Gopichand Katragadda
The former CTO of Tata Group and founder of AI company Myelin Foundry is driven to peel off known facts to discover unknown layers
@Gkatragadda

This brings us to a critical shift in value. Domain experience will become central. As AI systems grow more capable, the limiting factor will not be their ability to generate responses, but the quality of questions that are posed to them. What is often referred to as prompt engineering is, in essence, the articulation of context. That context comes from experience. Those who understand the nuances of a domain will be able to direct AI far more effectively than those who do not.

Careers, therefore, may take on a different shape. Early years may involve more structured roles where individuals build a foundational understanding. But as experience accumulates, work may fragment into projects and engagements. The trajectory could shift from stable employment to a portfolio of gigs, each drawing on accumulated expertise.

The most successful professionals in such a world will likely share a few characteristics. They will stay close to sources of information. They will engage directly with customers. They will remain hands-on, resisting the temptation to move too quickly into abstraction. In a system where much of the execution is automated, proximity to reality becomes a source of advantage.

There is, however, a paradox at the heart of this transition. If AI systems can perform a large share of the work, how do individuals gain the experience required to guide those very systems? Experience is not acquired through observation alone. It is built through doing, through mistakes, through context that cannot always be codified.

Yet, these very experiences are what feed AI systems, both directly through data and indirectly through human guidance. This creates a feedback loop. New forms of experience will need to be designed. Apprenticeship, simulation, and hybrid human-AI workflows may become critical in ensuring that expertise continues to develop.

The 1/100th company is about a different balance between people and systems. It is about organisations that are less constrained by coordination and more defined by purpose, judgment, and accountability. Some companies will shrink dramatically. Others will not. But across sectors, the assumption that scale requires proportional headcount is beginning to weaken.

The more important shift lies beneath the numbers. A company may increasingly be defined by how effectively it combines human insight with computational capability to deliver outcomes.

ILLUSIONS AND DELUSIONS

Growth by design: India's rise hinges on its industrial policy

TCA Ranganathan
The former chairman of the Export Import Bank of India is a banker with a theory of everything
@tcartca

At a time when turbulence and violence define a fractured and unpredictable world, "industrial policy" may sound technical, even dull. But beneath the jargon lies a question of national security. As supply chains turn into weapons, depending on others for critical technologies leaves countries dangerously exposed. It is thus precisely this neglected idea of what constitutes industrial policy that could determine whether India secures its future or remains exposed to strategic weakness, for it visualises the framework that guides entrepreneurs' views on investment, innovation, and jobs. A thoughtful industrial policy could be decisive.

It needs recalling that India's liberalisation in 1991 came just as the Washington Consensus was rising. With the Cold War over, global institutions pushed deregulation, privatisation, and financialisation as the universal recipe for growth. India, fresh out of a balance-of-payments crisis, embraced this model. Financial reforms and strong regulators followed. These reforms delivered undeniable growth but, at the same time, entrenched informality, widened inequality, and weakened domestic industries, as the real-sector governance model remained overlooked and thus unreformed.

Our biggest export became manpower, skilled and unskilled, through both legal and precarious channels. Today, even Washington has turned away from its consensus, reshoring supply chains and prioritising domestic manufacturing. If the architects of globalisation have shifted course, we too must rethink our path.

Our post-liberalisation growth has been undoubtedly impressive, but manufacturing has lagged. Millions remain stuck in low-tech, insecure jobs. Female labour participation is just 33.7%, far below the global average of 50%. That is not just a statistic; it is half our talent pool lying unused. Much of our high-tech output is still assembly-based, with critical components imported, mostly from China. This dependence persists despite India's recognised research strength in AI, robotics, and quantum computing. The Australian Strategic Policy Institute ranks India among the top five in over 65 critical technologies based on a long-term study of scientific papers published in globally ranked journals. The problem is clear: our firms have not yet scaled knowledge to industrial production.

Industrial policy spells an approach to governance. It is resilience, jobs, and sovereignty. Without a jobs-led strategy and stronger industrial muscle, India risks becoming a knowledge hub unable to mobilise its people or defend its independence. A new approach would mean investment in indigenous capabilities, innovation ecosystems, and transparent governance. For too long, budgets treated speculative entrepreneurs chasing stock gains as equal to those building factories and ecosystems. We became import-dependent. The messaging must change: tax breaks and subsidies should flow to those who invest in domestic R&D and local component ecosystems. When fiscal signals are clear – that national strength matters more than short-term profits – entrepreneurs will align with India's long-term priorities.

Other countries show the way. Germany's Mittelstand – small, specialised manufacturers – anchors resilience while competing globally. China's decentralised economic management allows provinces and cities to compete and diversify, even if it has led to waste through excessive capacity creation. South Korea built domestic semiconductor, shipbuilding, and electronics industries by first investing upstream, ensuring critical parts were made at home, even at a cost.

India's Production-Linked Incentives are promising but remain centralised. Policy design sits in Delhi, while states are reduced to passive participants. Tamil Nadu's automobile clusters, Gujarat's chemicals, Karnataka's IT, and Punjab's agribusiness – all need upgraded industrial estates, technical training institutions, and worker housing that empower women. A reimagined policy must combine national direction with local autonomy, setting broad priorities while allowing states and clusters to design sector-specific strategies. Execution must matter as much as formulation and be given the same importance. This will need realigning service seniorities away from centrally located ministries towards the districts, cities, and towns.

There is also a cultural dimension. India celebrates its service sector success, from IT exports to consulting. Manufacturing rarely enjoys the same prestige. Changing this mindset is crucial. At the same time, industrial policy must not only signal that building factories, designing components, and training workers are national priorities, but also ensure that supportive handholding is available to those venturing into production. When young graduates see manufacturing as a respected career, the ecosystem will gain momentum. When women feel safe and supported in industrial workplaces, participation will rise, strengthening families and the economy.

The current fractures in the global order are not just dangers to be managed, but opportunities to be claimed. An indigenous, jobs-led, participatory, and resilient industrial policy is not just a technocratic blueprint – it is the foundation of autonomy and equity. The lessons from Germany, China, and South Korea remind us that prosperity is never accidental; it is designed. And this design cannot be done in detached policymaking circles. It must draw on local insights and initiatives. Built on such a framework, growth can endure and translate into livelihoods, dignity, and opportunity for millions.

In a city like Bengaluru that rewards sleepless ambition and constant uptick, the line between high performance and mental distress is thin. Bipolar disorder often hides in plain sight, mistaken for drive or burnout, until the crash occurs. Recognising the pattern early can alter not just outcomes but entire lives, writes Alok Kulkarni

Hustle and its shadow

At 2.30 am, the lights in Karan's tony apartment in Whitefield were still on. His laptop glowed on the dining table. Half-finished plans for a start-up deck sat open across six tabs. He had not slept more than three hours a night for nearly a week, but he did not feel tired. If anything, he felt better than tired. He felt unstoppable.

He had called three friends after midnight with 'brilliant' ideas, signed up for an expensive online course he did not need, and messaged his manager promising he could take on two extra projects because he was 'finally operating at full capacity'.

By morning, he was at work, talking faster than usual, jumping from one idea to another, unusually charming and unusually impatient. Colleagues said he seemed 'on fire'. A friend joked that this was peak start-up energy. Another said this was what ambition looked like in the city.

A few weeks later, that fire went out.

Karan stopped answering calls. He lay in bed staring at the ceiling, unable to begin simple tasks. Bathing felt effortful. Food lost its taste. He was ashamed of the money he had spent, embarrassed by what he had said, and frightened by how quickly his mind had changed. What had first looked like drive and confidence had turned into something darker and harder to name.

Stories like this are one reason we need to talk about bipolar disorder now, especially in cities like Bengaluru, where long hours, poor sleep, relentless comparison, financial pressure, and a culture that rewards overwork can blur the line between high performance and distress. Many readers will know someone who seems to swing between periods of unusual energy and heavy withdrawal. Some may recognise parts of themselves. Bipolar disorder is not rare, not a moral weakness, and not simply moodiness. It is a serious but treatable mental health condition, and spotting it early can change the course of a life.

Not just mood swings

Bipolar disorder is a condition in which a person experiences significant shifts in mood, energy, activity, and functioning. These shifts are more intense than the usual ups and downs of life.

At one end may be depression: anhedonia, low mood, hopelessness, slowed thinking, loss of interest, fatigue, guilt, poor concentration, and sometimes thoughts of death or self-harm. At the other end may be mania or hypomania: an unusually elevated or irritable mood, increased energy, reduced need for sleep, racing thoughts, impulsive decisions, inflated confidence, and behaviour that is out of character.

That last point matters. Many people think mania simply means being very happy. It does not. A manic episode can include grand plans, excessive spending, risky behaviour, anger, restlessness, sexual disinhibition, or a level of confidence that cuts a person off from caution and reality. Hypomania is a milder form, but it can still disrupt judgement and relationships.

Bipolar disorder is often misunderstood because many people seek help only when they are depressed. The earlier high-energy phase may not look like an illness to them or to those around them. It may look like success. In a culture that praises hustle, speed, boldness, and constant availability, reduced sleep and nonstop productivity can even be admired, at least until things begin to fall apart.

The invisible early signs

The early signs are often easy to miss because they do not always arrive dramatically. Sometimes the first clues are subtle. A person who usually needs seven hours of sleep suddenly feels fine on three or four and insists they are functioning perfectly. Someone who is normally careful with money starts making impulsive purchases or risky investments. A quiet professional becomes unusually talkative, distractible, irritable, or socially overconfident.

A college student who was merely driven now seems unable to switch off. Someone starts too many projects, writes long, late-night messages, speaks rapidly, becomes argumentative, or begins to believe they have special insight that others are too slow to understand.

Families often notice the change before the person does. "You're not yourself," they may say. But because these shifts can initially look positive, more energy, more ideas, more sociability, warning signs are brushed aside.

Depression, too, can hide in plain sight. In urban settings, it is often written off as burnout, disappointment, laziness, a bad breakup, or just stress. But when sadness deepens into emptiness, when functioning drops, when sleep and appetite change, when a person feels slowed down, or life begins to feel pointless, it deserves attention. The key question is not whether someone is having a rough week. It is whether there is a clear, sustained change in mood, sleep, behaviour, and functioning.

Misdiagnosis and stigma

Bipolar disorder is often missed for several reasons.

First, people usually seek help during a depressive phase, not during a high-energy one. When someone presents with weeks of low mood, exhaustion, guilt, and inability to function, the immediate concern is depression. But unless a careful history is taken, including past periods of increased energy, decreased sleep, overspending, irritability, overconfidence, or reckless behaviour, bipolar disorder can be mistaken for unipolar depression.

Second, stigma remains powerful. Many patients and families are more willing to describe stress or tension than symptoms that may sound socially embarrassing. They may not volunteer information about risky behaviour, grand ideas, sexual impulsivity, aggression, or episodes that led to conflict at home or work. Shame edits the story, and that can delay a correct diagnosis.

Third, the social environment can reward the very behaviours that may signal trouble. In fast-paced metros, where work often spills into nights and weekends, sleeping less can look like dedication. Talking quickly can be mistaken for brilliance. Taking on too much can be framed as leadership. Spending freely can be read as confidence. What should raise concern may instead earn admiration, at least initially.

The result is that bipolar disorder may be identified late, after damage has already accumulated: strained relationships, debt, lost jobs, broken trust, academic decline, or severe depression. A person may be called dramatic, unstable, difficult, irresponsible, or weak before anyone asks a more useful question: could this be a treatable condition?

This is why public understanding matters. Bipolar disorder is not a bad temperament. It is not a poor character. And it is not something people can simply snap out of.

Learning the illness pattern

The good news is that bipolar disorder can be treated, and many people live full, productive, meaningful lives with the right care.

Treatment usually involves a combination of medication, regular follow-up, psychoeducation, and lifestyle stabilisation. Medication may be needed to control acute symptoms and reduce the risk of future episodes. The exact plan differs from person to person.

But treatment is not only about medicines. A large part of management is learning the illness pattern: recognising early warning signs, understanding triggers, observing how sleep affects mood, and acting quickly when symptoms begin to build. Psychoeducation becomes crucial here. Patients and families who understand bipolar disorder are better able to recognise change early, seek help sooner, stay consistent with treatment, and reduce relapse risk.

Routine matters more than many expect. Regular sleep and wake times, avoiding all-night work, reducing alcohol or substance use, keeping appointments, and building structure into the day are not minor add-ons. They are part of treatment.

Continuity matters just as much. Many people stop treatment when they begin to feel better, especially after a high-energy phase that felt powerful or productive. But feeling well is not the same as being protected from the next episode. Bipolar disorder usually requires ongoing monitoring, even during stable periods.

> In fast-paced metros, where work often spills into nights and weekends, sleeping less can look like dedication. Talking quickly can be mistaken for brilliance. What should raise concern may instead earn admiration, at least initially.

A checklist for families

- Keep a note of early warning signs.
- Encourage regular sleep and treatment follow-up.
- Do not argue with the person in the middle of a severe episode; focus on getting help.
- Remove easy access to means of self-harm if risk is present.
- Remember that support is not the same as doing nothing. Seek professional psychiatric help early.

Urban triggers and lifestyle factors

Urban life can make symptoms harder to spot and harder to manage.

Sleep disruption is one of the biggest challenges. Late-night work, international meetings, nightlife, screens in bed, endless scrolling, and irregular routines can all disturb the body clock. For someone vulnerable to bipolar disorder, sleep loss is not trivial. It can become a warning sign or even a trigger.

Then there is overstimulation: constant noise, traffic, crowded commutes, social comparison, financial strain, job insecurity, and the pressure to seem successful all the time. Bengaluru's work culture, especially in technology and corporate sectors, often normalises long hours, multitasking, blurred home-work boundaries, and permanent mental overdrive.

Substance use can further complicate the picture. Alcohol may be used to switch off; stimulants and excessive caffeine to keep going. Neither is a sustainable answer. Both can worsen mood instability, sleep problems, and judgement.

Social media adds another layer. During high-energy phases, it may amplify impulsivity, spending, grand plans, oversharing, or conflict. During depression, it can intensify comparison and shame. Digital life does not create bipolar disorder, but it can become part of the storm.

Family support is crucial

Bipolar disorder rarely affects only one person. It shapes households.

Families often move between worry, confusion, anger, and helplessness. During mania or hypomania, the person may resist help, deny illness, spend excessively, behave rudely, or make decisions that damage trust. During depression, they may withdraw, become dependent, or seem unreachable. Caregivers may feel exhausted and unprepared. Yet family support can be one of the strongest protective factors.

A family that learns to notice early signs, less sleep, more irritability, sudden grand plans, unexplained spending, social overactivity, or withdrawal, can help bring the person to care before a full episode develops. A calm, informed response works better than blame. "We are noticing changes. Let us act early" is more useful than accusation. Families also need support for themselves.

They need space to ask questions, voice frustration, and understand that relapse does not always mean failure. Recovery is often not linear. It is a process of learning patterns, building safeguards, and staying engaged with treatment.

Unfortunately, not all families respond with care. Some minimise symptoms. Some interpret them as stubbornness, lack of discipline, or moral weakness. Some delay psychiatric consultation because they fear labels, marriage concerns, or social judgement. This can cost precious time.

If there is one message families in urban India need to hear, it is this: early help is not an overreaction.

Bipolar disorder often hides behind labels that urban India celebrates or excuses: ambition, intensity, drive, burnout, temper, sensitivity, or "just stress". In high-pressure cities, symptoms can be normalised until harm becomes impossible to ignore.

Bipolar disorder is treatable, but delay has consequences. The sooner a person and family understand what they are dealing with, the better the chances of stability, safety, and recovery. This is not only a story about illness. It is also a story about recognition: learning when not to applaud distress, when not to dismiss suffering, and when to reach out before a crisis.

The point is not to diagnose every energetic person or every low mood as bipolar disorder. The point is to take sustained changes in mood, energy, activity, sleep, judgement, and functioning seriously, especially in a world that rarely tells people to slow down.

The author is a Bipolar Disorder expert at the Manas Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Hubballi. In 2023, he was awarded the IMH Marshall Mood Disorders Fellowship by the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

Where to seek help: • NIMHANS helpline: **080-46110007** • Tele-MANAS:**14416** or **1-800-891-4416** - Government of India's 24/7 mental health support helpline, available in multiple languages.

KETO DIET

for mental health?

In recent years, some limited studies have started to suggest that the keto diet may help reduce symptoms of mental illnesses like depression and bipolar disorder

Maya Schumer, 32, a neuroscientist in Belmont, Massachusetts, was living with bipolar disorder for more than a decade. She had tried nearly every treatment — therapy, antipsychotics, mood stabilisers, anticonvulsants — to help control her symptoms. But her panic attacks, mania, depression and brain fog still lingered.

By 2024, she said, she was "the most suicidal" she had ever been. So when her psychiatrist suggested she try the ketogenic diet, which focuses on high-fat, low-carbohydrate foods, she decided she had nothing left to lose.

Within five months of eating more foods high in fat, such as red meat, butter and avocado and fewer grains, fruits and vegetables, her panic attacks decreased, and she could focus without using a stimulant, she said. Her depression persisted, however, so her psychiatrist added a low dose of lithium. Finally, with a combination of diet and medication, she said, "things clicked." She described feeling stable, secure and grounded, and her illness seemed easier to manage. She likened it to being able to see without glasses.

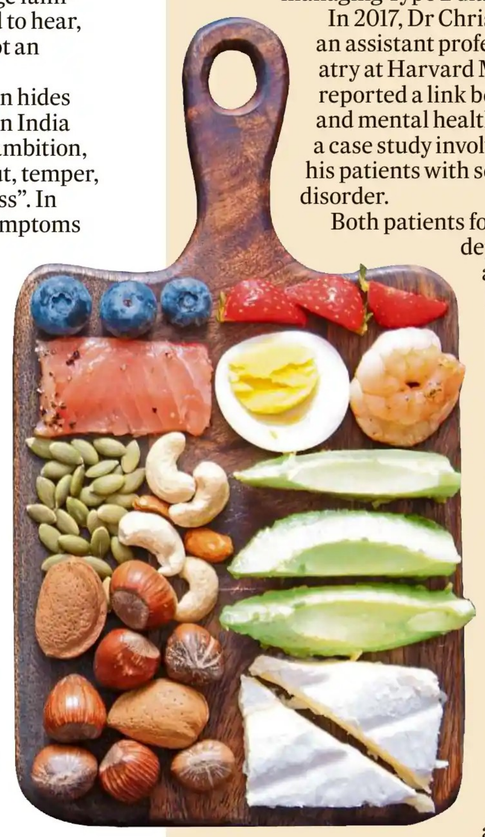
In recent years, some limited studies have started to suggest that the keto diet may help reduce symptoms of mental illnesses like depression, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.

Experts say the diet should not replace proven treatments like therapy or psychiatric medications. But some people — especially those who haven't had much success with the medications or who have experienced severe side effects — say they are desperate for other solutions. Now, doctors and patients have started to experiment with keto for mental illness treatment.

The ketogenic diet has been used since the 1920s as a treatment for epilepsy, though it is better known and more commonly used today for weight loss.

There are many versions of the diet, but all recommend eating high-fat, low-carbohydrate foods such as eggs, meat, fish, butter, nuts and nonstarchy vegetables, including leafy greens and cauliflower. Grains, legumes, sweets, most fruits and starchy vegetables such as potatoes are off limits.

The goal is to put the body into ketosis — when cells "switch" from mainly burning carbohydrates for energy to burning fat for energy, said Dr Shebani Sethi, director of the metabolic psychiatry program at Stanford Medicine. This stabilises and lowers blood sugar and insulin levels and may reduce appetite, which could help with weight loss and managing Type 2 diabetes.



In 2017, Dr Christopher Palmer, an assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, reported a link between the diet and mental health, publishing a case study involving two of his patients with schizoaffective disorder.

Both patients found that their depression lifted and their hallucinations and delusions faded after trying the keto diet for a few weeks. When they stopped the diet, their symptoms returned within 24 hours.

Research on the diet's success in treating epilepsy has suggested that keto seems to stabilise brain cells, reduce inflammation and balance the levels of neurotransmitters in the brain, Palmer said. Some small and limited studies have supported the hypothesis that such brain changes could help people with mental illness, too.

It's also possible that these positive results were partly because of a placebo effect — or a phenomenon where a person's health improves based on a belief that a treatment will make them feel better, said Min Gao, a senior researcher in metabolic psychiatry at the University of Oxford. Because neither study included a control group, she said, it's hard to rely on the conclusions.

Far more research is needed to determine the effects of the keto diet on mental health, she added.

NYT

In Nobel laureate Han Kang's universe, violence and tenderness exist in uneasy proximity, and her writing reflects this struggle in these fraught times, writes Sudipta Datta

Luminous wounds

In her brilliant lecture, Han Kang dwells at length on how and why she decided to write Human Acts, about the student uprising in Gwangju in 1980. Seen here are the Dol Hareubang stone statues found all over Jeju Island, said to be gods offering both protection and fertility.

As a child, Han Kang had a lot of questions. Why are humans born? What is the meaning of a human being's brief stay in this world? Why do suffering and love exist? How difficult is it to remain human, come what may? As a writer, she has endured these questions and lived inside them while giving readers a profound reckoning of the human condition in novel after novel.

Han Kang. (PIC COURTESY: WIKIMEDIA)

Awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2024 "for her intense, poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life," Han Kang delivered an incandescent lecture, Light and Thread, at the prize ceremony, which has now been translated into English by e. yaewon and Paige Aniyah Morris and published as a book. The eponymous title also includes some of her poetry, notes on nature as she watches her garden grow, and thoughts on her writing process, translated by Maya West.

LIGHT AND THREAD
Han Kang
Hamish, pp 176, Rs 799

The South Korean writer found fame in the English-speaking world with her third novel, The Vegetarian, translated by Deborah Smith, which won the Man Booker International Prize in 2016. The protagonist, Yeong-hye, takes a radical step of giving up eating meat to protest against violence. She ends up refusing all food and drink, barring water, as she believes she is transforming into a plant. Thus, Yeong-hye finds herself in the "ironic situation of quickening towards death in her bid to save herself." Han Kang says she set the final scene in an ambulance in the hope that Yeong-hye will remain alive in the world of the story. It took Han Kang two years from 2003 to 2005 to write The Vegetarian, and during that time she lived with some painful questions: "Can a person ever be completely innocent? To what depths can we reject violence? What happens to one who refuses to belong to the species called humans?"

Questions she continued to ask in her subsequent novels, Ink and Blood and Greek Lessons, but in both she expanded her probing. We cannot all turn into plants as a protest against violence, so how do we continue? "Must we not survive in the end? Should our lives not bear witness to what is true? If we must live in this world, which moments make that possible?"

The protagonists of Greek Lessons, a woman who has lost her speech and a man who is losing his sight, cross paths and a beautiful moment transpires when the woman writes a few words in the man's palm. Han Kang says that in that "luminous instant that expands to an eternity," the characters reveal their softer parts of themselves, prompting the writer to ask: "Could it be that by regarding the softer aspects of humanity, by caressing the irrefutable warmth that resides there, we can go on living after all in this brief, violent world?"

In 2012, soon after Greek Lessons was published, Han Kang thought her next novel would take "another step towards light and warmth," but 20-odd pages on, she stopped writing. She realised that something was preventing her from writing a "life and world-embracing work" — and that was Gwangju.

In her brilliant lecture, she dwells at length on how and why she decided to write Human Acts, about the student uprising in Gwangju in 1980 and the violent takedown by the state. Han Kang was nine years old when her family decided to leave Gwangju for Seoul. The mass killings would begin soon, and Han Kang chanced upon a book of photos which contained evidence of Gwangju residents being killed with clubs, bayonets, and guns while resisting the new military powers that orchestrated a coup.

Juxtaposed with this act of violence, there was another photo of an endless queue of people waiting to donate blood outside a university hospital. The images stayed with her, prompting her to ask more questions: Are humans capable of extreme violence — and also profound kindness? How are humans this violent? And yet how is it that they can simultaneously stand opposite such overwhelming violence? Human Acts and the subsequent We Do Not Part, about the Jeju Island massacre in 1948, are a show of resistance against forgetting; both light a candle in memory of the dead. The parallel existence of human cruelty and dignity, as Han Kang reflects, is not unique to Gwangju or Jeju. It has happened "again and again across time and space, always in the present tense. Even now." But as her immersive writing process showed her, Han Kang's work is not just about the internal struggle between two strands of thought — Why is the world so violent and painful? And yet how can the world be so beautiful? In all her writing, she says the "oldest and fundamental undertone" has been directed towards love. The work of reading and writing literature stands in opposition to all acts that destroy life, and love is at the heart of it. In these dark, fraught times, Han Kang's words are like a balm: "We cannot help but imagine hope, so long as we live." Happily for her readers, she is on to her next novel, which she says is formally linked to The White Book, written in memory of her older sister who left the world two hours after she was born.

The reviewer is a journalist based in Kolkata.

'My education is the only thing that is truly mine'

Husain's account is a touching portrait of the author's outward search and inward journey of ensuring dignity for every girl, writes Rakhee Roytalukdar

"Maafi, Maafi, Maafi." This was not someone pleading 'sorry' for a wrong done. These were the names screaming from a list of 'out-of-school girls' in Ghatol block in Rajasthan's tribal dominated Banswara district.

"As I read, my eyes moved from village to village, household number to household number, but the girls' names remained the same. Maafi. Line after line. Maafi, Maafi, Maafi. I just kept on scrolling, clenching the computer mouse in my hand, until the spreadsheet went empty again. I let out a sigh, and the repetition stopped, but my eyes welled up, my vision of spreadsheet got distorted and the tears began," pens Safeena Husain, author of 'Every Last Girl' and founder of 'Educate Girls' a NGO founded in 2007, working at the grassroots, and dedicated to girls' education in rural and marginalised communities. Her work has helped bring back two million girls into the classroom. Her organisation won the 2025 Ramon Magsaysay award.

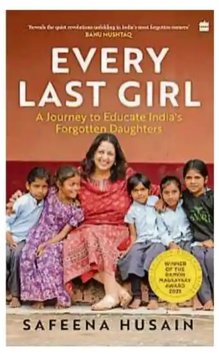
Safeena Husain. (PIC COURTESY: WIKIMEDIA)

Not just Maafi, names like Faltu (Useless), Maanbhaari (Heavy Heart), Dhaapu (Fed-Up), Antimbala (Last one) abound, and Safeena writes that these names exemplify girls as less, undeserving and expendable and reveal a mindset that denies them an education, makes them work at home and outside and ultimately ends in marriage and early motherhood.

It is against this bleak scenario of parents being frustrated and disappointed over having an unwanted girl and hoping that she would be the last one (antimbala) that Safeena found rays of hope, too.

In her book, she talks about Nagina Bano from Falna, who stood up in a meeting mostly composed of men, and spoke about the importance of education, when she said, "My education is the only thing that is truly mine. No one can beat it out of me. No one can steal it from me. No flood, no famine can take it away; my education will be with me till my dying day." She writes that meeting Nagina was a turning point in her life, helping her to understand that education is a human right, which firmed up her resolve to educate the 'last-mile' girl. Safeena takes us through other incredible stories of many such girls like Vibha, Ganaki, Andu and Anisha Kumari, whose father, despite being a smallholder farmer, was also an outlier, who did his best to support his daughter. Composed around the clarion call to not leave any girl behind, the book also dwells on her traumatic childhood and how it acted as a trigger for her to embark on this ambitious and extremely difficult mission. Her childhood was spent around hardship, poverty, violence and abuse, which interrupted her education for three years until her aunt rescued her and provided her stability. Her renewed education trajectory changed her life course, and she ended up at the London School of Economics, becoming the first in her family to do so. She started working in San Francisco at a software startup in 1995, but later quit to join a health nonprofit.

Distressed over the entrenched idea that a girl's worth is lesser than a boy's, the author says that she understood that the biggest challenge was changing the mindset. Although she knew that the solution had to be human, she had to learn the hard way how to achieve this seemingly impossible task. Safeena details how she realised the power of storytelling in changing mindsets and how she failed initially while her local volunteers built relationships, invested time, listened, earned trust and did not just approach it as a transactional exercise. She weaves in many anecdotes about how she learnt valuable lessons, especially the role of local role models and influencers in driving a mindset.



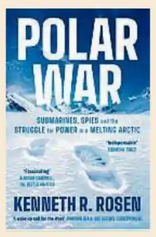
EVERY LAST GIRL
Safeena Husain
HarperCollins, pp 276, Rs 499

The author also dwells upon the problem of not finding the last girl despite back-breaking survey work conducted by her organisation to track down out-of-school girls in Pali and Jalore districts of Rajasthan. There remained many hotspots where girls did not go to school, and those places remained out of the government records or their survey. And how AI helped to track these unknown girls, as it could predict the villages where they were likely to find more invisible and forgotten girls. Every Last Girl is a moving portrait of the author's both outward search and inward journey of finding dignity for every last girl. She writes, "In this book, I would like to rewrite the story of the girls I have met and for those I haven't."

MOODBOARD

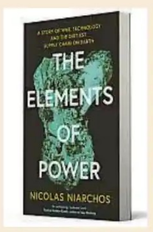
The world feels increasingly unstable, and these books cut through the noise and offer immersive ways to understand what's reshaping our present.

Polar War by Kenneth R Rosen (Hachette)
The Arctic stands at the crossroads of geopolitical ambition and environmental catastrophe.



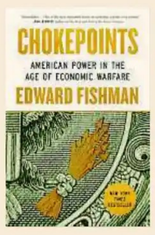
President Trump's assertions on Greenland reveal a regional context where fast-moving climate change is opening up new trade routes, untapped natural resources and long-frozen biological weapons. The author draws on first-hand reportage to document the race to control this crucial territory.

Elements of Power by Nicolas Niarchos (HarperCollins)
This tells the story of the war for the global supply of battery metals, essential for the decarbonisation of our economies,



and the terrible, bloody human cost of this badly misunderstood industry. Exploring the advent of the lithium-ion battery and tracing the supply chain for its production, Niarchos tells the story both of the people driving these tectonic changes and those whose lives are being upended.

Chokepoints by Edward Fishman (Penguin)
Economic warfare has become the primary way the United States confronts international crises



and counters rivals. Sometimes it has achieved spectacular success; other times, bitter failure. The result we live with today is a new world order: an economic arms race among great powers and a fracturing global economy. Chokepoints is the definitive account of how America pioneered this new, hard-hitting style of economic war — and how it's changing the world.

Mood Board *is a column that presents thematic lists of books on hot-button topics.*

Satisfying tale of love and other pirouettes

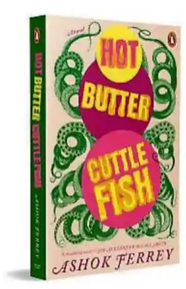
This delicious novel packs in a lot, and you don't realise how much is going on because of its languorous pace and wicked humour, writes Saudha Kasim

The multi-hyphenate Ashok Ferrey doesn't give us a detailed description of hot butter cuttlefish, the popular Sri Lankan starter that lends its name to his latest novel. The internet obliges: it's batter-fried squid stir-fried with chilli, garlic, butter, and spring onions. "No Sri Lankan party is complete without this as an accompaniment to whiskey", proclaims one blog, and it's "great with fried rice too". In Ferrey's novel, the dish doesn't have much of a role to play besides being the star item on the menu of Mr Yung's Chinese eatery in the fictional village of Kalabola, where the story is set. But the tale he tells is as delicious as its namesake dish.

Malik, the personal trainer who narrates Hot Butter Cuttlefish, describes Kalabola as nestled "in the armpit of that vast natural lake, the largest in all Sri Lanka, which spreads its tentacles like an octopus between the Colombo and Kalatura districts." The village has a collection of distinct, oddball personalities, ranging from villainous politicians to middle-aged women from the Kandyan aristocracy who have seen better days, and young girls on the make looking to escape their humdrum circumstances by marrying a much older man with a large estate.

The man with the large estate in question is Arthur, the final descendant of the de Fonseca dynasty that made its fortune collaborating with colonial powers and from mining plumbago to supply gun manufacturers during the world wars. Arthur has none of the shrewd business sense of his forefathers — most of the family fortune has been lost, and only the ancestral house on the lake in Kolabala remains, where Malik first meets him, "wearing a long shapeless raincoat and black tights" as he twirls and pirouettes through a ballet routine. Arthur is about to put on a ballet performance and would like Malik's help with fitness training for one of the dancers, Chanchala, the prettiest girl in the village.

The novel is set in a fictional village on the banks of a large natural lake in Sri Lanka. (PIC FOR REPRESENTATION)



HOT BUTTER CUTTLEFISH
Ashok Ferrey
Penguin, pp 240, Rs 499

Arthur, whose income mainly comes from coconut harvests these days, was much indulged as a young man by his mother and never married. He lives under the autocratic rule of Kamala, his housekeeper, who regards him as the 'one-who-got-away', who'd turned down the opportunity to marry her when they were both young (the rejection still stings — especially as she's from a prominent Kandyan family, even if they were reduced to running a bakery). While Arthur is kind and easy-going, he can also be very slippery. Kamala "could never decide whether she loved or loathed her employer. It seemed to her supremely logical that she could do both."

Things in the de Fonseca household — and in Kalabola — come to a boil during the ballet performance when Kamala storms the event, yelling at Arthur and creating a scene. The Sinhala word for prostitute, vaisey, is thrown around liberally — Kamala has cottoned on to Arthur's amorous intentions toward young Chanchala, who is encouraging his overtures with her mother's support. Soon after the ballet fiasco, Arthur proposes marriage to Chanchala.

However, Covid interferes with their plans, and when the country goes into lockdown, the nefarious local MP and minister Biju starts selling tap water as Kalabola Water, a miracle cure. Kamala is roped in as brand ambassador for this quackery (the label on the bottle features her with brawny forearms in a red dress and the tagline "Take the water, there's no arm in it") which she willingly participates in partly out of a need to one-up the feckless Arthur and also because Biju is her second cousin and had courted her in their youth. Biju is also angling to get hold of Arthur's estate at a steeply discounted price so he can build an ugly but lucrative township by the lake.

Hot Butter Cuttlefish packs in a lot — and you don't realise how much is going on because Ferrey's tale is so languorously paced and there's a pleasingly high ratio of jokes per page. His humour is the kind that sneaks up on you:

"'There are plenty of other bedrooms,' the Minister crooned in her ear. 'Plenty? What am I supposed to be, part of some harem? Among how many others?' It pained her deeply, this unwarranted increase of tarts in the village. Any more and she'd be forced to reopen the bakery."

As I read Hot Butter Cuttlefish, I did wonder if Ferrey would close it with a strong finish — surely such a high-wire act couldn't be sustained through 260 pages. I needn't have worried — this story of Kalabola, as told by Malik the trainer, has a deeply satisfying end, and I hope it's not the last we see of Arthur, Kamala, Biju, and the rest of these oddballs. They deserve another outing in Ferrey's highly capable hands.

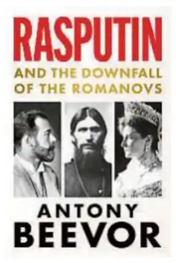
READ OF THE WEEK

How could a barely literate peasant from Siberia determine the fate of the world? Undoubtedly, the so-called 'mad monk' Rasputin bewitched Tsar Nicholas II and his wife, Alexandra. Yet their strange and scandalous relationship conceals a riddle, one that casts an intriguing light on the controversial 'great man' theory of history.

Rasputin was a devoted monarchist, not a revolutionary. He had no official position, no forces at his command. Nevertheless, he contributed more to the fall of the Romanov dynasty than any other individual. So demoralised was the Tsarist officer corps by stories of corruption, to say nothing of the rumours of his debauchery with the Empress — and even her daughters — that when the February Revolution broke out, not a sword was raised in defence of the regime.

Just as Rasputin cast a spell over the Romanovs, his legend has bewitched historians. More than a century later, we still fail to fully comprehend the collapse of the greatest autocracy on Earth. Was there any truth to the wild tales that brought down the empire? Or was his true legacy an unsettling lesson on the potency of myth?

A regular in the 11th Hussars, Antony Beevor served in Germany and England. He has had several books published, and his book Stalingrad was awarded the Samuel Johnson Prize.



HE SAID/ SHE SAID *Indu Balachandran*

Who's better at recycling?

Man, many believe, was created out of recycled mud, by a supreme being. Woman was thereafter created out of the rib of man. Perhaps the world's first case of creative recycling for a global purpose.

So recently, on March 18, Global Recycling Day, I wondered: which gender is the better one today, in our collective drive of don't-waste, re-use, re-create? I had my own biased view, but was happily validated by studies: women are apparently better than men at recycling/repurposing, long before it had an official logo and hashtags.

Women, ingrained with centuries of 'making do', have an inborn ability extracting maximum worth out of limited resources. My grandmother, using her rolling pin, always extracted three more perfectly adequate ribbons of toothpaste out of empty, about-to-be discarded tubes. Her zero-waste policy was also my mother's motto in the kitchen: leftover curries turned into khichdi, plain rice became lemon rice, surplus bread transformed into bread upma.They also instinctively looked for a new use before discarding: old sari? A new life as a curtain. Old curtain? New life as a cushion cover. Old cushion cover? New life as a floor swabber.

Men in general don't have such innate traits, says a report in Stanford magazine. Reusing is considered too feminine by some bigoted macho men; even going into denial when unchecked consumption warns of environmental disasters. Which leads to this rather uneasy thought: today, be it man or woman, we have a tendency to keep buying something new, rather than use, let alone reuse, what we already have stashed at home. Gender experts observe that women and men may differ on what they hoard most in cupboards — which they hurriedly close when guilt hits.

'Maybe' and 'just in case'

Women may not consciously be straining our land fills with indestructible clothing, but many are straining cupboards with about 30 pieces of garments in a dubious 'maybe collection': maybe if you lose weight. Maybe if you find that good repair-tailor. Maybe you could give this to your sister. Maybe Juliet-sleeves will come back into fashion. Maybe these jeans can become shorts. Maybe this stuck zip can be unstuck (rubbing wax? or is it vaseline?). Maybe you'll be invited to a celebrity wedding. Maybe the ecommerce platform will take back wrong deliveries even after three years.

Men, says a study, never throw away medicines: remedies self-prescribed after googling a strange symptom. Zinc tablets bought in Covid times because everyone was swallowing them; calcium for bones you heard creak. Vitamin D for when sunlight disappears. Magnesium for sleep you don't get, worrying why you're not getting sleep. Something for that bald patch.

Time we did something to use it, or lose it from our cupboards! Ladies: repair, clean, pack and give away your wardrobe's unworn treasures to the thrift store. Men: clean up your medicinal mess, before their expiry date leads to yours. So before the next recycling day, let's at least cycle first. Starting with that exercise cycle you bought with such enthusiasm — and which is now just a stand in your room, to dry towels.

*(**He Said/She Said** is a monthly column on gender issues — funny side up. Reach the author at indubee8@yahoo.co.in.)*

Women living with autoimmune diseases make several adjustments to their daily routines and activities, from choosing 'safe' sports to mapping spaces by restroom access. These everyday negotiations don't find a place in medical reports but are definitely shaping lives of many women, writes Seethalakshmi Suraj

Navigating INVISIBLE BURDENS

AUTOIMMUNE AWARENESS MONTH

Picture this: You step out of your home knowing you must return within a four-hour window. While you're out, you map spaces not by comfort or cuisine, but by restroom access. That's what living with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) can look like.

Now try this: You want to exercise but cannot risk injury because your platelet count is low due to immune thrombocytopenia (ITP). You choose a "safe" sport — swimming — yet return home bruised and exhausted, while the chlorine irritates teeth weakened by earlier steroid medication.

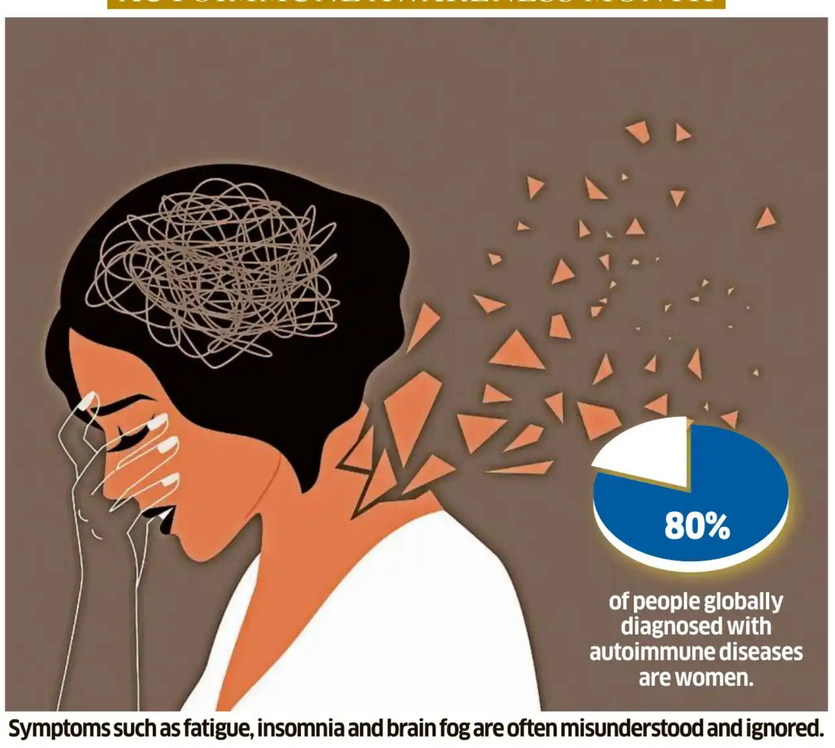
These everyday negotiations rarely appear in medical reports, yet they shape the lives of millions of women living with autoimmune disease.

Autoimmune diseases occur when the immune system mistakenly attacks healthy cells, organs, joints or skin. Conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, IBD and many others fall under this umbrella.

Globally, nearly 80 per cent of people diagnosed with autoimmune diseases are women, and researchers believe hormonal factors, genetic predisposition and environmental triggers may all play a role.

Beyond biology lies another challenge: the cultural expectations placed on women, which often widen the gap between what medical tests capture and what patients actually experience.

In conversations with women across India living with autoimmune conditions, one theme emerged repeatedly: symptoms often exist long before they are validated by diagnostic tests.



Symptoms such as fatigue, insomnia and brain fog are often misunderstood and ignored.

When symptoms don't show up on charts

Deepa Kannan, a passionate crocheter who lives with rheumatoid arthritis, remembers how her symptoms were initially misunderstood.

"The symptom started with inflammation in my left wrist and slight pain in my neck and shoulders," she recalls. "Many doctors mistook it for muscle cramps or overstrain because I crochet, and advised me to stop crocheting altogether."

Though she paused the hobby she loved for nearly two years, the problem persisted. "My wrist movement eventually became completely restricted," Deepa recalls.

Uma Ganesan, who has lived with IBD for eight years, recalls how her earliest symptoms — frequent bathroom visits and abdominal cramping — were initially dismissed as pregnancy hormones and stress. Today, her life revolves around careful planning.

"I can't plan anything without planning my meal intake and my proximity to a washroom," she says. "From being an adventurous and independent person, I now dread travelling."

Invisible weight of chronic illness

Many autoimmune conditions are described as invisible illnesses — the body may appear healthy even when internal symptoms are severe. Symptoms such as fatigue, insomnia and brain fog are often misunderstood, which over time can lead to career disruptions, social withdrawal and major lifestyle adjustments.

This author, who has lived with ITP for over a decade, says medical professionals also need to recognise the emotional toll of the disease.

Vaishali Tanwar, another ITP patient, echoes this sentiment.

"I get tired very easily, especially after work or exercise," she says. "The medications also cause gut issues and migraines, and I catch infections more easily."

The emotional impact can also reshape life plans. For Vaishali, one of the hardest aspects has been deeply personal.

"The hardest invisible part is not being able to give my child a sibling," she says.

For Sonia Dogra, who lives with alopecia areata, the unpredictability of hair loss brought its own emotional challenges. She also remembers how discouraging her first consultation was.

"The first doctor I went to see scared me so much. He said I was very late to come for diagnosis and it was impossible to save my hair. Ten years later, I have proved him wrong. I am in a better space with regards to my hair than he had predicted. I wish doctors would understand the importance of positive reinforcement."

Deepa Kannan adds that social expectations can deepen the struggle.

"In the early stages, cultural expectations weighed heavily on me. When people saw me in pain, they would say, "You must be strong and overcome it," as if it were simply a matter of willpower. Over time, I learned to accept my condition and prioritise caring for my health."

Why self-advocacy becomes essential

Many patients learn that advocating for themselves is crucial. While this writer questioned certain treatments after experiencing long-term steroid side effects, and chose holistic approaches and lifestyle changes instead, for Vaishali, self-advocacy means actively participating in her care.

"It means asking questions, seeking clear explanations about my condition and understanding treatment options," she says. "It also means persisting until I find the right medical guidance," she adds. Sonia recalls declining steroid injections despite being assured they were harmless.

"Self-advocacy means making my own personal choices, even if they are not the popular ones," she says, adding, "It means having the right to say no to treatments."

For Uma, self-advocacy has meant learning to listen closely to her body. "Don't blindly believe when symptoms are dismissed as being in your head," she says.

Travel

Arriving by ferry from the coastal city of La Spezia in Italy, Anupama Ramakrishnan is struck by the charm of Monterosso Al Mare, one of the five ancient fishing villages of Cinque Terre, a World Heritage Site

Romancing Monterosso

I sat on the worn stone steps of the trail leading to the Convento dei Cappuccini, just above Monterosso Al Mare, the quaint town in Liguria in northern Italy. The stones spoke of the footmarks of pilgrims, fishermen, and farmers, long before tourists like me left our own trail.

Below, the Ligurian Sea glimmered in the sun!

Hikers passed by me. Sneakers scraped against the rock; climbers moved with determination, while those descending wore a smile of content.

The hike was not easy. Not for me.

Two fellow travellers paused beside me and asked, "Why didn't you go all the way up?"

"I'm enjoying the view, observing," I replied. "It feels like a place to sit down and write a few verses."

"You are in the right place," the lady added casually.

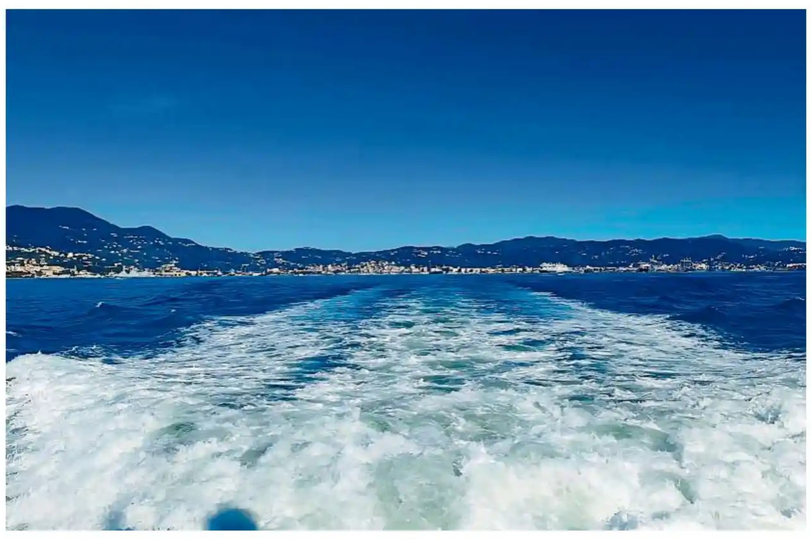
"Did you know Keats and Shelley were inspired by these waters?" she asked.

I did not.

The Romantic poets, I learnt, were drawn to these waters, just beyond the edge of the Gulf of Poets.

As I began my descent, I felt as though I was stepping back into the 19th century. While John Keats drew his last breath in Rome, his contemporary Percy Bysshe Shelley famously lived and sailed these very waters. The sudden insight that the English Romantics had looked upon these same waters changed my perspective. The Ligurian Sea turned turquoise now. I was looking deeper into the coastline. I felt poetry in motion.

I had arrived in Monterosso Al Mare by ferry from La Spezia. As the boat pulled away from the harbour, I had leaned over the rail, skimming my fingers through the water. It was cool and sharp. Beneath the surface, silver fishes darted through the turquoise water. Acciughe? I wondered. The famous anchovies of the region?



The Ligurian Sea forms the ideal backdrop for the colourful buildings along the coast. PIC COURTESY: AMEYA DEO

Ageless beauty of Cinque Terre

Monterosso Al Mare is one of the five ancient fishing villages of Cinque Terre (Five Lands). The villages are located on the Italian Riviera, south of Genoa, in northwest Italy. The five villages Riomaggiore, Manarola, Corniglia, Vernazza, and Monterosso Al Mare cling to the cliffs of Northern Italy with ageless grace. Cinque Terre was picture perfect to me.

From the ferry, the houses looked stacked tightly, painted in ochres, pinks, and faded reds. Narrow paths and stone stairways hemmed the villages together. People have lived here for over a thousand years, geographical barriers notwithstanding. The land is steep and rocky. Generations carved thousands of terraces into the hillsides by hand, I have heard. Dry stone walls which were built without mortar, support vineyards, olive trees, and lemon groves. Churches, watchtowers, and winding footpaths stood witness to lives shaped by weather and tides, not to forget the hard labour of the villagers. Cinque Terre is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a unique example of harmony between people and landscape.

A splash of water woke me up from my reverie. The ferry was stopping briefly at each village. Riomaggiore appeared first. Manarola followed, postcard-perfect, Corniglia hovered above the sea, while Vernazza seemed emerging from the water. At every harbour, passengers stepped on and off the ferry, excitement ringing through their voices. "Are we there yet?" I kept asking myself.

And then came Monterosso

Monterosso came last. A long sandy beach stretched out, with striped umbrellas and pastel buildings. Narrow streets led to bakeries, wine shops, and small stores selling linen, lemon soap, anchovies packed in oil, and stacked with postcards.

Above it all rose the Convento dei Cappuccini, founded in the early 17th century. Within the church hangs a crucifixion attributed to Van Dyck. Outside, a statue of St Francis of Assisi with a wolf towered over the Ligurian Sea. From the trail near the monastery, the Ligurian Sea stretches in blues and greens. Standing there, it was easy to understand how poets once paused and found words rising uninterrupted.

Shelley sailed these waters. Keats never quite reached Monterosso Al Mare, yet the place feels aligned with his final months in Italy. He died in Rome.

Back in town, I wandered through cobbled streets, watching shoppers bargain and locals chat aloud.

The old and the modern

The town is a tale of two halves: the modern Fegina and the Old Town, separated by a tunnel.

Back in the narrow streets of the Old Town, I found the Church of San Giovanni Battista. Built between the 13th and 14th centuries, its facade is a striking example of Genoese Gothic architecture, striped with alternating layers of white marble and dark green serpentine. The Torre dell'Orologio or clock tower rises over the old square, offering a glimpse of Monterosso's medieval past.

Riomaggiore, one of the fishing villages that's part of Cinque Terre.

The famed clock tower at Monterosso Al Mare.

Along the coast, the Aurora Tower, a 16th-century watchtower, guarded against pirate raids.

Aroma of food

For centuries, the village was sustained by fishing, especially anchovies, salted and preserved.

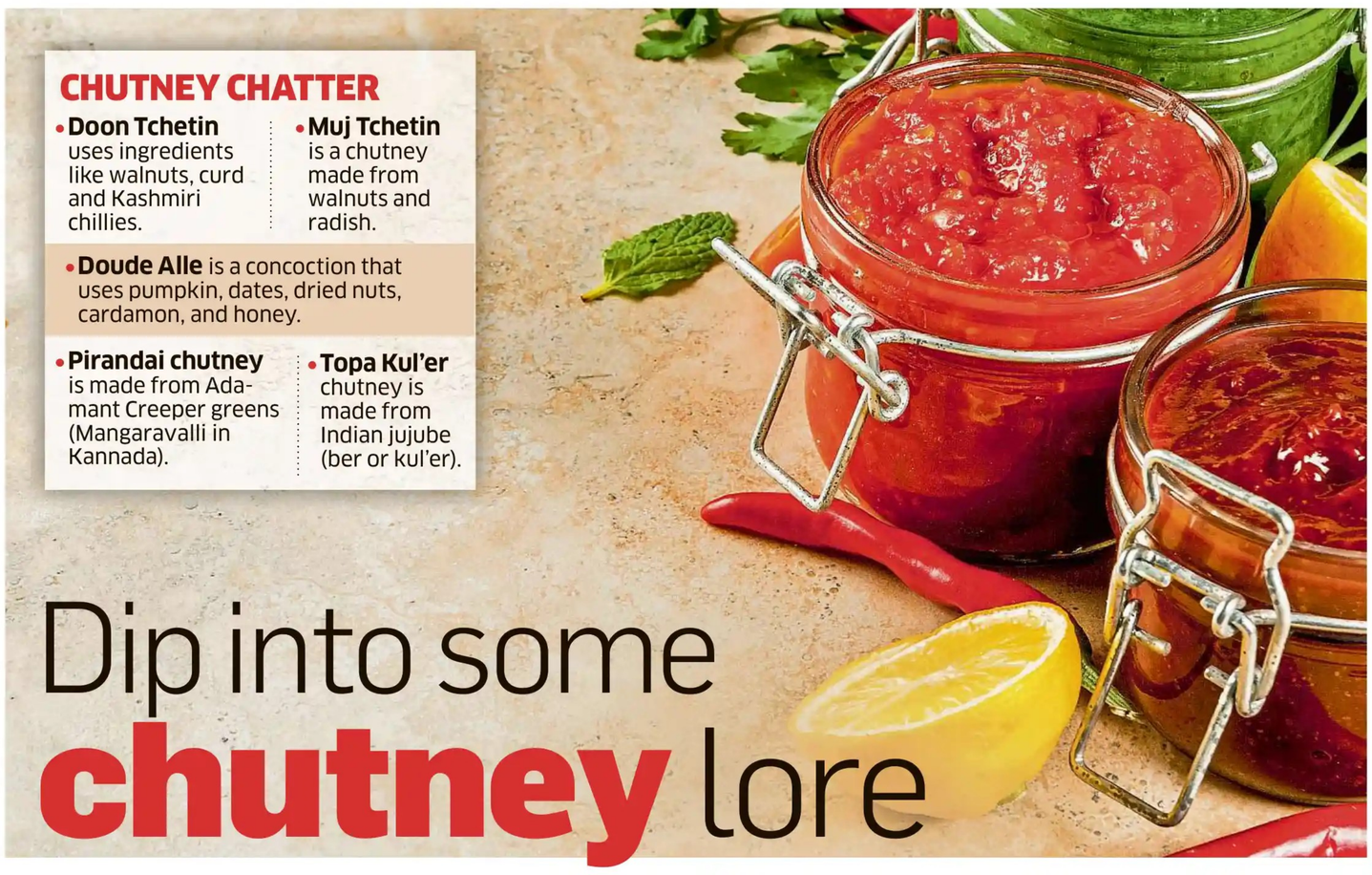
The aroma of food drifted through the air. Olive oil, garlic, citrus. History lingered in the menus and markets. I found myself in a crowded, yet cosy restaurant. Lunch was perfect: anchovies laid over bruschetta, brightened with lemon and olive oil, paired with a cold lemon drink.

Later, walking toward Monterosso Al Mare railway station, I walked past beachgoers, shopkeepers, and stone walls. The sun was at its peak, but its warmth felt gentle.

As I waited for the train at Monterosso station, I thought again of the ferry rail, the cold water on my fingers, the silver fish prancing beneath the surface. Having grown up with the sea in my backyard, Monterosso Al Mare reminded me of what I have always known: when you meet the water, pause and reflect. Some lessons don't change; they simply deepen.

Harbour houses in Monterosso Al Mare stacked along the Ligurian coast. PIC COURTESY: AMEYA DEO

The chutney has a history that dates back to ancient times and continues to find a place on most Indian platters. Fehmida Zakeer gives you a sample of the many varieties, from coconut to red ant, from the spicy gongura to Kashmir's walnut chutney



Dip into some chutney lore

CHUTNEY CHATTER

- **Doon Tchetin** uses ingredients like walnuts, curd and Kashmiri chillies.
- **Muj Tchetin** is a chutney made from walnuts and radish.
- **Doude Alle** is a concoction that uses pumpkin, dates, dried nuts, cardamon, and honey.
- **Pirandai chutney** is made from Adamant Creeper greens (Mangaravalli in Kannada).
- **Topa Kul'er** chutney is made from Indian jujube (ber or kul'er).

Ridgegourd chutney. PIC COURTESY: SHANTI PETIWALA

In Kerala, boiled/steamed and tempered tapioca paired with spicy red fish curry is a popular dish. But for me, the only acceptable accompaniment for the tapioca is the tangy tamarind chutney made with crushed garlic, shallots, green or bird's eye chillies and some drops of coconut oil. This spicy chutney which can be made in a matter of few minutes elevates the taste of boiled tapioca as nothing else can, and adding to its charm is the ease of making it.

A chutney can be a concoction of easily available ingredients mashed together to bring out a blend of appetising flavours. Pankhuri Agrawal, Founder, Yayavr and community creator says, "As a Bangalorean, chutney for me is synonymous with idli, while in my mother's Marwari home, chutney is synonymous with chaat. Theeki and meeti chutney makes or breaks the bhel, pani puri and sev batata puri."

The chutney goes places

The chutney, which most often finds a place on dinner tables across the subcontinent, has a history that goes back to ancient times. Early Sanskrit literature dating back to 500 BC contains references to them, and the tradition of ground ingredients served with food can be found in Sangam literature too.

Traders and the colonial powers who landed in the subcontinent took the chutney home and it travelled to other parts of the world. The British not only transformed the Hindustani word, chatni, to its anglicised form as it is popularly known today but also transformed it into a cooked form, preserved with vinegar and sugar. Lizzie Colligham in her book, Curry: A Tale of Cooks and Conquerors, points out how English cooks tried to replicate the chutneys brought back by the merchants and sailors of the East India Company, by adding vinegar to prolong shelf life and using fruits such as marrows, apples or tomatoes in place of mangoes and bamboo. To increase the spiciness, they added raisins, mustard powder and horseradish.

Red ant chutney. PIC COURTESY: GARIMA TIWARI

Pirandai chutney, made of greens from a creeper. PIC COURTESY: SOUMYA ARJUN

Rushina Munraw-Ghildyal, whose recently published book titled Chutneys: A Compendium of Stories and Recipes, says, "Chutneys are the fresh element of the meal, immediate, often raw, designed to provide a zesty counterpoint to the plate and highly perishable (most are made to last mere hours or a maximum a couple of days. It's "live" food, meant to be consumed at its peak before its aromas, flavours and nutrients fade."

The book, containing more than 230 chutney recipes, also explores the history and traditions of this versatile condiment.

While the most common ingredients used to make chutneys include coconut, coriander leaves, ginger, garlic, mint leaves, tamarind, and dates, every state in India has its unique chutneys with ingredients ranging from papaya, pineapple, and guava to flowers, foraged leaves like stinging nettle, *centella asiatica* (gotu kola), sorrel leaves, crabs, even ants and fermented fish. By using highly nutritious ingredients like moringa leaves, cluster beans, amla, wood apples, kokum, seasonal fruits like karonda, the versatile chutney changes from being just a side-dish to one that incorporates vitamins and minerals, besides fibre and protein in a tasteful package.

Regional stars

Ghildayal also points out that in a chutney, less appealing ingredients, like bitter fenugreek, strongly aromatic flax seeds, hardy peels, mature stems, or intensely flavoured foraged leaves become far more palatable and enjoyable. Talking about some of the regional ingredients that challenged her definition of what can go into this appetising condiment, she says, "I found chutneys made from red ants (chaprah) in the East, which offer a sharp, formic acidity that no lemon or tamarind can replicate, consumed for their medicinal properties. Similarly, I discovered the deep magic of pirandai chutney, (this is a plant called the Adamant Creeper), known as a "bone setter" valued for its high calcium content believed to aid bone health that is made in Tamil Nadu. It has a tangy, slightly spicy, and pungent taste."

The chutney also contributes to zero-waste cooking practises. In Meghalaya, red pumpkin seeds are removed and sun-dried to take on the star role in a simple chutney, while ridge gourd peels are used in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and the Konkan coast to make robust chutneys. Ghildayal says that the use of things we normally toss without a second thought—ridge gourd peels, watermelon seeds or even cauliflower stalks is not just about frugality but inherent wisdom. "Vegetable peels often hold the most concentrated flavour and fibre, and when ground with the right spices they transform into something incredibly sophisticated."

Festive concoctions

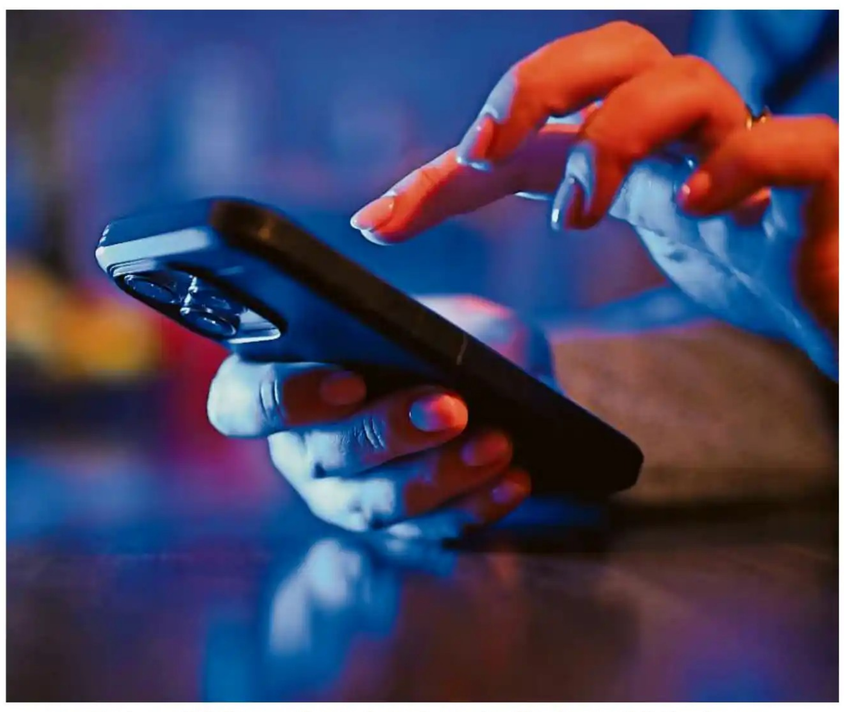
Specific chutneys are also made for festivals and pujas like Topa Kul'er chutney made from Indian Jujube for Saraswati puja and Jolpai'er chutney made with Indian olives for Lakshmi puja in West Bengal.

Sujata Shukla, a chartered accountant by profession and author of Bhog Naivedya: Food Offerings to Gods, says, "Chutneys form an integral part of religious and festive feasts. In Darjeeling, it is a tradition to eat several varieties of tubers accompanied by a chutney made with roasted tomato or roasted sesame seeds ground with fireball chilli peppers while in Andhra Pradesh, for Gowri Puja, an elaborate meal is prepared and offered to the goddess along with chutneys made from curry leaves, gongura leaves or lentils."

She also points out that the Kashmiri Wazwan feast for Eid includes chutneys such as Doon Tchetin from walnuts, curd and Kashmiri chillies, Muj Tchetin from walnuts and radish and Doude Alle from pumpkin, dates, dried nuts, cardamom, and honey. "For Hanukkah, Baghdadi Jews of Kolkata prepare a chutney made out of a paste of fenugreek seeds, ginger, garlic, green chilli, coriander and mint leaves, lemon juice and salt."

Doomed from the start

When you are overwhelmed, bored, or unable to focus, picking up your phone and scrolling offers an immediate and easy escape. Want to kick the habit of mindless scrolling? The solution lies not in abstinence but in agency, writes Rashikkha Ra Iyer



Each scroll delivers a dopamine release, leading to an addictive loop.

In an age defined by perpetual connectivity, doom scrolling has become a near automatic response to discomfort. A moment of procrastination, a difficult social encounter, a stressful day, or even a vague sense of restlessness can trigger the familiar upward swipe. What appears to be a harmless distraction often evolves into a patterned behaviour that feels increasingly difficult to interrupt. Although the term "doom scrolling" has become ubiquitous, the scientific mechanisms that make it so compelling are only now being fully illuminated.

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Neurobiological architecture

At its core, doom scrolling exploits the brain's reward circuitry. Each scroll delivers a small, transient pulse of dopamine—the neurotransmitter central to reward anticipation and reinforcement learning. Crucially, the reward is unpredictable. Some posts are amusing, others alarming, and yet others utterly trivial. This variable reward schedule mirrors the reinforcement structure of gambling devices, where uncertainty itself becomes the most potent driver of engagement. Neuroscientific research shows that unpredictable rewards amplify dopamine release more than predictable ones. The brain becomes conditioned to expect that the next piece of content might be emotionally salient, socially relevant, or novel enough to satisfy the craving for stimulation. Over time, this intermittent reinforcement can lead to tolerance: the user requires more scrolling, more novelty, and more time online to achieve the same neurochemical effect. This pattern aligns closely with the mechanisms underlying behavioural addictions, where the behaviour—not an external substance—becomes the primary source of reward.

Doom scrolling is therefore not merely a lapse in discipline. It is a behaviour shaped by neurobiological processes that make disengagement increasingly challenging.

Default coping mechanism

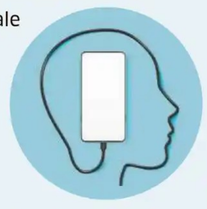
The behaviour often emerges in moments of emotional or cognitive discomfort. When individuals feel overwhelmed, socially disconnected, bored, or unable to focus, scrolling offers an immediate, low effort escape.

The device becomes a portable regulator of mood and attention—always available, always responsive, and always capable of providing a temporary buffer against internal discomfort.

This creates a self-reinforcing loop: the more one relies on scrolling to manage emotions, the less capable one becomes of tolerating discomfort without it. Over time, doom scrolling shifts from a conscious choice to an automatic, reflexive behaviour.

NUDGE, NUDGE

- Time use reminders, prompts encouraging mindful engagement, or friction-based design elements that slow down impulsive scrolling may help.
- Turning on grayscale modes that reduce the sensory appeal; "news feed diets" that limit algorithmically curated content can be useful.



- Use app blockers, physically distance yourself from the phone for a few hours and turn off alerts or notifications to stop scrolling.

Nudges, design shifts, and digital hygiene

Emerging research has begun to identify strategies that can disrupt this cycle. Ethical nudging—subtle design interventions that guide users toward healthier digital habits—has shown measurable promise. These nudges may include time use reminders, prompts encouraging mindful engagement, or friction based design elements that slow down impulsive scrolling.

Practical tools complement these behavioural strategies. Browser extensions that de-emphasise visual stimulation, grayscale modes that reduce the sensory appeal of feeds, and "news feed diets" that limit algorithmically curated content have all demonstrated potential in reducing compulsive scrolling. By weakening the reward loop and reducing novelty, these interventions help restore intentionality to digital engagement.

Mindfulness based approaches further enhance these tools by helping individuals recognise the emotional triggers that precede scrolling. When users learn to observe the urge rather than immediately act on it, they begin to reclaim agency over their attention.

Role of healthcare and education

Healthcare providers are increasingly recognising doom scrolling as a distinct behavioural pattern that warrants clinical attention. Developing screening tools that assess digital coping strategies, reward sensitivity, and compulsive use patterns may become essential as digital behaviours intersect with anxiety, depression, and attention related conditions.

Educational institutions also have a critical responsibility. Digital literacy programmes must evolve beyond discussions of online safety to include the neurobiological and psychological mechanisms that shape digital habits. When students understand why their devices feel irresistible, they are better equipped to establish healthy boundaries and cultivate intentional digital practices.

Reclaiming attention

Doom scrolling is not a personal failing; it is a predictable response to technologies engineered to capture attention by leveraging the brain's reward systems. Understanding the science behind this behaviour is the first step toward reclaiming control. With thoughtful design, evidence based interventions, and a deeper cultural awareness of digital habits, individuals and institutions can begin to reshape the relationship between humans and their screens. The goal is not abstinence but agency—transforming doom scrolling from an unconscious compulsion into a deliberate choice.

(The author is a multidisciplinary professional and practicing psychotherapist who works in the UK.)

MYTHBUSTER

Leftover rice: Good or bad?

One of the most common concerns in South Indian kitchens is leftover rice, and whether it is alright to refrigerate it, for later use. There are many homes where leftover rice is binned because of a long-held belief that it's not good for reusing. However, refrigerated rice is perfectly good to be consumed later. You can cool cooked rice and put it right back in the refrigerator, and if saved in an airtight container, the food can last for at least two to three days. However, if rice is not refrigerated, then in humid and very warm conditions, there is a high probability that it goes bad, and shouldn't be consumed. If leftover rice has a slimy feel to it or smells sour, then it's best to discard it. Food left at room temperature, especially in tropical conditions, for an extended period of time can cause food poisoning, because of the bacterium called *bacillus cereus*, which produces spores that resist heat.

An advantage of cooling cooked rice and consuming it once it's back to room temperature or reheating it is that refrigerated rice lowers glycemic response – it is good for diabetics to eat refrigerated and reheated rice. A 2015 study published in the *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition* tested resistant starch content in three varieties of rice: freshly cooked white rice, cooked white rice that was cooled for ten hours at room temperature, and cooked white rice that was cooked for a day at 4 deg C.

The results showed that resistant starch content in the third group was the highest (1.65 g/100 g as compared to 0.64 g and 1.30 g, respectively for the first two groups).

Starch in rice retrogrades and hardens when it is cooked, and more so in a fridge – this is called resistant starch, wherein the molecules of starch turn into crystal form and resist the digestion process. This is why it lowers the response of your blood glucose and also acts as a prebiotic, that aids good bacteria to grow and is useful for your gut health.

In effect, the leftover rice in your fridge is good to be consumed, and it is a myth that it is unhealthy. The caveat, of course, is that it needs to be stored properly, once it is cooled at room temperature.

*Curated by Savitha Karthik (***Mythbuster** *is a column that picks up a popular wellness belief and examines if it is true, false, or maybe lies somewhere in between.)*

A few of the works on display at the exhibition. ALL PICS COURTESY: JEHANGIR NICHOLSON ART FOUNDATION

Waste as our witness

An unusual exhibition on industrial debris is serving as a larger enquiry into the fraught relationship between land, profit and endless cycles of consumption, writes
Devina Dutt

ON THE PALETTE

There are many big ideas in Navjot Altaf's exhibition, Waste Archives as Landscape, curated by Puja Vaish, which opened at the Jehangir Nicholson Art Gallery at the CSMVS Museum in Mumbai recently. Navjot has had a deep interest in the imminent stresses and strains of development and the hideous social inequities, as well as the ecological and human cost that continues to accrue in a relentless pursuit of growth.

The current exhibition comprises detailed, intricate paintings of industrial waste and debris that we have learnt to unsee. The genesis for these lay in Navjot's numerous visits to and collection of photos of landfills in Deonar, Kanjur Marg (in Mumbai), Pirana (Ahmedabad), and Citizen Nagar (outskirts of Ahmedabad). People from the lowest social orders have lived in these hellish surroundings with hills of heaving waste only becoming bigger for more than five decades, surrounded by contaminated water, poor air and stench. But sometimes when the midday sun falls on them, the "shimmer of a toffee wrapper reflects the iridescence of a dragonfly wing, which is fragile and endangered", says Navjot.

There are hundreds of cut images from photos of electronic components falling over one another, as in the installation titled Take Make Waste. The images of disorderly waste, of PVC pipes, computer cables and screens and the detritus of urban living in the digital age seem photographic at first glance but have subtle enough alterations to remind us that they have been mediated.

Painterliness slips in an occasional incongruous element with a close-up of flowers that have, against all odds, still survived. Painting flowers is a first for her, and she says she wanted to suggest "that natural waste enhances biodiversity, whereas machine waste depletes it".

This is an exhibition that a visitor would better understand with some foreknowledge of Navjot's previous work and her enduring interest in finding connections between life, migration, travel, debris, society and culture.

Since 1997, Navjot has divided her time between Bastar in Chhattisgarh and Mumbai. In Bastar, she has grown her arts practice with indigenous artists, anchoring herself in people's movements and the learnings that living in these communities offers. This exhibition, then, is a distinct part of a larger enquiry into the fraught relationship between land, profit and endless cycles of production and consumption.

She follows the trail of industrial waste products, debris, and their alarming appearance in villages and interiors of the state that were once considered remote and therefore protected. From seeing coal mines and ash dykes in the forests of Central India for years, it was her repeated travels in Raigarh and Korba in North West Chhattisgarh that provided the kernel for her earlier video Soul Breath Wind and this series of works.

On one occasion in 2016, while travelling with a group of activist friends, they stopped by a serene forest setting on the banks of the Hasdeo River (a tributary of the Mahanadi), only to find a pit with two truckloads of industrial waste. Villages had been leased for the dumping of industrial waste, she says with a measure of wonder.

"That's when I started looking at this kind of waste a little more seriously and attentively, and that's how I see it, it is a continuation of my earlier works", she says.

The artist who graduated from JJ School of Art in Mumbai says she almost stopped painting in 1991 and has been attracted to multimedia as she was always interested in working with diverse mediums and perspectives.

The baobab at the exhibition.

The form also offers her the ability to find fluid narrative connections. She refers to fragments of many stories that come together in the works. For instance, there are broken down pieces of a ship named Khian that started out of Philadelphia and called itself a cargo ship, looking for a place it could dump the waste it was carrying. It changed its name and finally dumped the waste between Singapore and Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean.

Meanwhile, in the gallery, a motor and sound-based installation with pipes that signify a movement of material from one place to another, reminiscent of her experiences with landfills, continues to work.

Closer home to the CSMVS Museum's own past and the many kinds of art and artefacts that have found a home there, the artist identified an old Baobab tree native to Africa that has stood in its premises since the 1930s.

Drawing parallels with the propagation of plant species from native to new lands, Navjot's ideas and practice coalesce in her photographic montage of the Baobab tree. Following the style of a botanical drawing, the artist is able to reference the tradition of painting landscapes and plant varieties as part of a colonial project of staking claim on nature and all it had to offer.

To Navjot, the painting and the museum also speak of the centuries-old culture of travel, migration, dislocation and the uprooting of communities by colonisers who also removed objects and installed them elsewhere to populate collections in museums far from their source cultures.

Shifting through sensory landscapes

Deepa Natarajan Lobo writes about an ongoing exhibition of paintings where artist Kapila Nahender turns her gaze to the green echoes of Bengaluru's simpler past

DAB HAND

With Bengaluru's skyline getting dotted by an increasing number of skyscrapers and its roads stretching endlessly to form concrete jungles, catching a glimpse of the city's older, greener side almost feels like stumbling onto a secret. But in several quieter corners of the city, one can still see lush pockets of greenery — pleasant surprises in the form of creepers threading through railings, terrace gardens perched in quiet grandeur above the humdrum, and massive trees holding their ground between buildings.

At the 'Pockets of Resistance' exhibition being held at the Venkatappa Art Gallery, artist Kapila Nahender turns her gaze to these green echoes of a simpler past, gently urging viewers to slow down even as the world moves at a break-neck speed. Through 17 paintings and two soft-painted sculptures, Kapila pays tribute to the once-famed Garden City by not only making it a subject of her show but also an active collaborator. "In entirety, the city has always been home to me. Its speciality lies in the seasonal flowers in bloom, the trees shedding their leaves making dusty piles, the smell of rain and the wet earth, the glistening streets after a drizzle, the dense clouds, the fallen leaves on windscreens of cars, puddles and the cement dust that covers it all," she reflects.

These sensory snapshots — wet earth, cement dust, fallen leaves — become the building blocks of her works in the series. Rather than depicting nature as static or decorative, she allows her forms to shift and evolve across the canvas with different layers of paint drying at different times. "This way, I was able to reflect and execute with deliberation," she notes.

Working on several pieces at once, she ensured that each work is connected to the other rather than standing alone, a cohesive bond that forms the backbone of the show. She resisted isolating the pieces, explaining that "to pick key works doesn't arise as they all interlock with each other." That said, she felt that 'Urban Garden 14', a large piece and the soft-painted sculptures 'Urban Garden 18 and 19' pushed the boundaries of her practice, expanding both scale and form within the series.

Oil paint has been Kapila's medium for nearly 30 years. She loves how its layers build up slowly, letting her reflect as she works and giving her a chance to pause when everyone else is rushing. "The answers come gradually, and the shapes and forms evolve on their own. Taking time to see them emerging through the paint is a fascinating revelation for me," she expresses. One could see that in her paintings — the shapes hovered between something familiar and something abstract, shifting with each glance.

For 'Pockets of Resistance', Kapila didn't stick to just oil paints. She brought in natural pigments from soil, plant dyes, pressed flowers, twigs, seeds, and dried leaves. These were part of a larger question on sustainability, both in the materials and the longevity of art itself. Installed in Gallery 2, many of the works are suspended to encourage viewers to engage with them from multiple distances so that they can discover new emerging forms. The soft sculptures, meanwhile, are positioned to be viewed from all angles, inviting movement and interaction. There is, she adds, a deliberate attempt to retain an element of surprise for visitors.While the show is anchored in Bengaluru's landscape, its themes go way beyond geography. 'Pockets of Resistance' speaks to a broader idea of endurance —environmental as well as personal. The works suggest that even within rigid systems, organic and sustainable growth cannot be boxed in.

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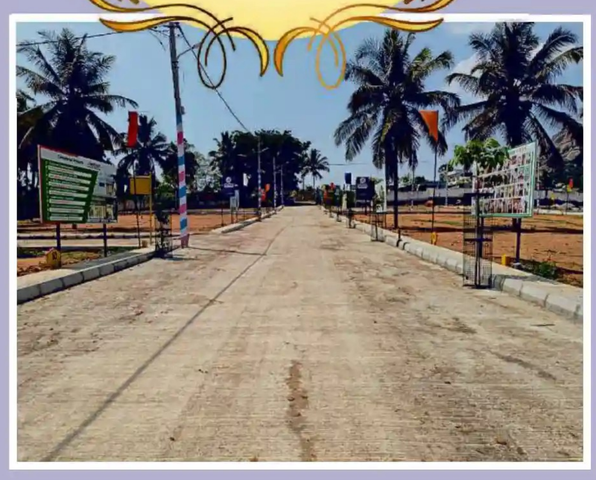

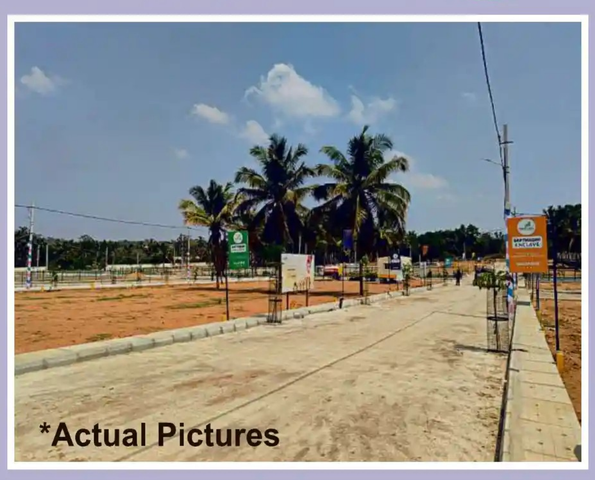

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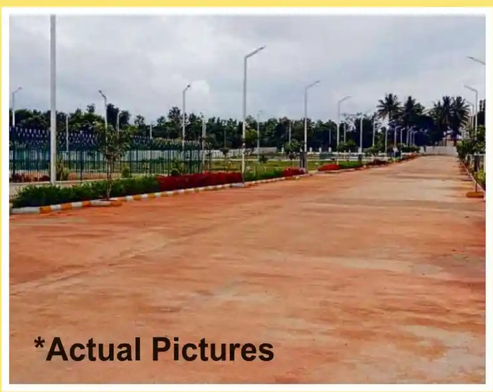

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ADDRESS MAKER

RERA REGISTRATION : PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/250822/005190

THE AKSHARA
VALLEY ADDRESS

PREMIUM PLOTS NEAR KENGERI METRO STATION

BDA APPROVED | OC RECEIVED

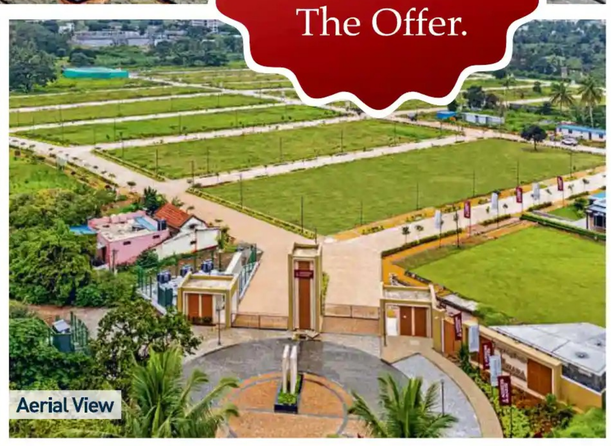
Actual shot of Main Entrance

HURRY !
LAST 4 DAYS To Avail The Offer.

Actual shot : Multi-Court

Actual shot : Miyawaki Forest

Actual shot : Pickelball Court


Aerial View

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NEW INVENTORY, NOW UNVEILED.

With the release of new inventory at "The Akshara Valley Address", you can now claim your space in a community where nature takes center stage. Nestled close to Kengeri Metro Station and NICE Road, it offers the perfect escape from city congestion while keeping every convenience within reach.

Step in today and build the villa you've always imagined.

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20000+ TREES

₹1.15 Cr* onwards

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6.7Mn Delivered+3.1Mn In Progress

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Classifieds

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REAL ESTATE SELLING

House

BTM Layout

BDA 40X60 House for Sale G+1. near BTM Metro. Rs.33,800/- psqft. Brokers Excuse. 9480255422.

Basaweshwaranagar

BASAVESWARNAGAR BEML LAYOUT 39x60 SF 4BHK Duplex House Sale, All Teakwood, Carpark, Prime Location: 9448324477/ 7795163795

Jayanagar

RAGGIGUDDA 30X40 North BDA, clear title, old house, near Metro Station (Agents Excuse) Murali- 9845232711

J P Nagar

J.P.NAGAR 4TH Phase 30x40, South, old house, BDA clear title near Ringroad, Suraj Realtors- 9845232711

J.P.NAGAR 3RD Phase 30x40 East facing old house (Mini forest) clear title, Suraj Realtors- 9845232711

Kanakapura Road

"FOR RENT_2BHK close to Forum_South_Mall, Konanakunte Metro_Station, Kumaran School. 9845286505"

Ullal

***MUNESWARA NAGAR** Ullal Main-Road* 30x40 East_Facing House_ground 2BHK 1,2,3 Floors 3BHK_with car-parking. ₹2,95,00,000/- ABHILASHA CONSULTANT: 9480565758

Flat

Kanakapura Road

PRIME CENTREO, Acacia tower 1454 sft ready flat for sale near Vajarahalli metro. Ct 9962372203.

Nagarabhavi

FLATS FOR-SALE @ Nagarabhavi Chandra Layout 2 & 3 BHK Ready to Move In Good Location Call:9538472420 9845066608

Tumkur Road

60X40 `A`KHATHA 100Square Building, 8Flats, 8Carpark Walkable Chikkabidarakallu Metro`& Adjacent-to Prestige Jindal-City. 7.02.Cr. 7019455938.

Agricultural Land

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AGRICULTURAL LAND-SALE 15 K.M. From CHIKKABALLAPUR. 8 K.M. From HYDERABAD HIGHWAY. Suitable: FARMHOUSE 7019666458.

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K R Puram

STANDALONE BUILDING Krishnarajapuram 4000 square feet occupied by reputed tenants good ROI. 6374573379

Commercial Land

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SALE- CONVERTED Betterment Paid Land extent 35000 sqft A Khata. E Khata available. Opp to Kengeri Metro Station, Rs. 12000 per sqft. Brokers Excuse. Contact: 9880459141.

Commerical

Basaveshwaranagar

BASAVESHWAR NAGAR 100 Feet Road Commercial 40X60 BDA Property For Sale Call: 9341260828

Jayanagar

JAYANAGAR 9TH Block 30x40 Commercial vacant Site near Central Mall (good footfall) Suraj Realtors- 9845232711

Rajajinagar

RAJAJINAGAR BDA Commercial Property 70x110 West Facing Gayathri Nagar Main Road Contact: 7899570235

Vishweshwariah Layout

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY: For Sale/ Rent/ Lease Land Space: 7000 Sqft Built up Area 25000 Sqft Basement + Stilt + Ground + 3 Floors, For Multipurpose use including Showrooms, Retail outlets, Warehouse. Prime location 100 ft ring road 5th block Vishweshwaraiah Layout. Contact: 8431895685/ 9591037315

General

Out-Station

MUMBAI SEA FACE JOINT DEVELOPMENT PROPERTIES AVAILABLE SRADEVELOPMENTS, REDEVELOPMENTS. GOA SALE CASINO 5STAR HOTEL. 9702932709

Industrial & Factory

Out-Station

INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY FOR SALE OR LEASE

60 gunthas (1.5 Acres) K.I.A.D.B. HONAGA Industrial Area, Honaga, Belagavi, Karnataka. Clear title, protected boundries, water tank, bore well, toilet facility, 150 KVA connection (HT Line),500 KVA transformer # 30 ft Road at one side.. Directly connected to Puna-Bangalore highway.(400 mtr from NH4)

CONTACT NO:- MOB :- 9448274014

Tumkur Road

SALE 10/ 12/ 30/ 105 Acres Industrial, Warehouse, Commercial, Residential Land. Dabaspet Nelamangala. NAIK: 9141326819

SALE/ BUILT to suit, 10 Acres Industrial Converted Land Suitable for Warehouse, Industry. Dabaspet 9141326819

REAL ESTATE BUYING

Commercial Land

Devanahalli

WE HAVE Buyers for 10acres to 30acres Land around Devanahalli_for educational institutions. Any Engineering college either closed or_Running with 10 to 30acres Land can'also contact_us. Clear titles. Arun 9845077299.

Industrial & Factory

General

LOOKING FOR 40000 sft shed with power for a manufacturing unit with 20 feet space all around it. Location is in and around Nelamangala or on Kunigal road. Call: 9845031885

LOOKING FOR 2 Acre Industrial Land With Clear Holding for a Manufacturing Unit in and around Nelamangala or Kunigal Road. Call: 9341927505

Sites

Banashankari

BDA SITES WANTED ARKAVATI, ANJANAPURA, BANASHANKARI 6TH STAGE, VISHWESHWARAIAH KEMPEGOWDA ANY BDA LAYOUT: 9845062822/ 8660751654

Multiple Locations

WANTED BDA Sites Arkavathi, Nadaprabhu Kempegowda & BDA other Layouts. Contact: SAPTHAGIRI (Opposite BDA Head Office):: 9036360366

Nagarabhavi

WANTED BDA SITE 30x40, 40x60, 50x80 Vishweswaraiah, Nagarabhavi, NGF, ITI, MPM, RHCS, Kempegowda Layout. 9008418631.

Vishweshwariah Layout

BUYING/ SELLING 20x30,30x40,40x60 50x80 BDA sites at VISHVESHWARAIAH LAYOUT, BSK 6th-stage. Contact: 9844533371/ 9341733480

BUILDERS ESSENTIAL

Water Proofing

'WE-FIX' LEAKING ROOF, SUMP, SKYLIGHT, BATHROOM, TILING, HOUSE PAINTING, ROOF COOL EPOXY COATING. MACBOND. 9448572697

LEAKAGE... LEAKAGE... Old/New Building, Sump, Bathroom, Wallcrack, Skylight, Terrace Waterproofing done by New Technology- 9880916988

RENTAL PROPERTIES

Accommodation Available

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RENTAL AVAILABLE Commercial Space Jayanagar 3rd Block Indoor space 1400 sft Outdoor space 650 sft Contact: 9591243838

MULTISTORIED CORNER Building available for rent 1 & 2 floor commercial space suitable for Bank and office 2,250 Sqft Each. 2 BHK & 3 BHK apartment available with stilt parking at medahalli Junction, NH: 75, B'lore East, BBMP Limits Contact :9108460024, 9449446676

Industrial And Factory

FOR RENT Kiadb Malur in 1.5 acre Industrial sheds 10000 5000 sft office 2500 sft workers & security. Power 200Hp. Contact 9845037777

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RENT: 2BHK Ist Floor, Girinagar, 1BHK, Ist Floor, Hanumanthnagar, Amenities, Semi furnished. Owner: 78925-30410/ 9448809902

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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WANTED IMMEDIATELY HOUSEKEEPING STAFF 20 NO's (ONLY MALE CANDIDATE) LOCATION HORNADU ANNAPOORNESHWARI TEMPLE SALARY 15000 FOR 8 HRS, PLUS OT, ESI & PF, FREE FOOD & ACCOMODATION. CONTACT:- 6366521234 / 9620627627

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Website: www.set.edu.in / E-mail : set.edu.in@gmail.com

Seshadripuram Institute of Technology, Mysuru

An upcoming engineering college with a vision of become an institution that is "shaping tomorrow's engineers today" is looking for

PRINCIPAL

The candidate needs to have proven track record in academic leadership with team building, accreditation processes, and institutional development. Desired attributes are administrative experience with knowledge of AICTE/GoK/VTU norms and excellent interpersonal communication skills.

Qualification as per AICTE/VTU norms and should be above 50 years of age.

Candidates who have served as Principal/Dean/ Director will be preferred. AICTE VII pay scale is implemented and gross salary will be commensurate with experience and credentials.

Last date to apply: 11.04.2026

Eligible candidates may apply in handwritten application along with a detailed resume, passport size photo & copies of testimonials etc. to the **Honorary General Secretary, Seshadripuram Educational Trust, Bengaluru** through e-mail to **set.edu.in@gmail.com**

N. R. Pandith Aradhya, President — Dr. Wooday P. Krishna, Honorary General Secretary

POM POWER

A leading brand in the manufacture of Online UPS, Solar Hybrid and On-grid Inverters, and EV Chargers, is looking for the following positions.

1. **GENERAL MANAGER, MARKETING:** 5 to 6 years of experience in UPS systems/ Solar Inverters.
2. **ASST. GENERAL MANAGER, MARKETING:** 4 to 5 years of experience selling Solar Inverters or UPS for industrial / commercial offices.
3. **SALES EXECUTIVES:** 1 to 2 years of experience selling UPS.
4. **SERVICE EXECUTIVES:** ITI / Diploma in Electrical/Electronics with 1 to 2 years of experience in UPS / Solar Inverters.

For Walk-in Interview Call: 9035010265
Share your resume at: pompower@pompower.in
No.75, 6th A Main, 3rd Phase, Peenya Industrial Area, Bangalore - 560 058.

Teachers/ Professors

ST.CHARLES HIGH SCHOOL#1086 1st_Block,3rd_Stage Adarsha_Layout Basaveshwaranagar Bangalore-79. Phone:080-23235220/ 9449150749. Invites the Applications from Trained_and Experienced English Medium-Teachers for Nursery,Primary,and High School to_teach all_the_Subjects including-Computer,CP.Ed and Drawing.Qualification required:NTT,TCH D.Ed,B.Sc B.Ed,BA B.Ed.

ST. MARTIN'S High School, 7th Cross, Behind Anjan Theatre, Magadi road, Bengaluru- 560023. Require: - Head Mistress & Academic Advisor /Clerk qualified and trained teachers for Nursery, Primary High School to teach all the subjects including computer, PE and Drawing, Preferably ladies. Contact number: 080-23101999, 9916184299, 9591990199.

WANTED ENGLISH and SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS for High School Salary Negotiable. Walk-in-Interview on working days 'JNANADEEPTHI ENGLISH SCHOOL', #56, 6th Main, Avalahalli, BDA Layout, Girinagar, Bangalore-85. Phone: 26748056 (Near 36A Bus-stop)

WANTED TEACHERS ICSE Curriculum ENGLISH BA, MA, MATHS, CHEMISTRY, HINDI & P.E Contact OXFORD PUBLIC SCHOOL. Srikantapura Anchepalya Near Jindal Public School Tumkur Road Bangalore. Mobile No: 9001111030, 9620075574

ADITYA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL
607, 21st Cross, Laxman Rao Nagar, Koramangala, Vivekanagar (Post), B-47.
REQUIRED TEACHER'S
Teach from LKG to 10th Std for all the Subjects
Qualification: SSLC, PUC, NTT, TCH, D.Ed, Degree, B.Ed
Contact Immediately
8073093749
9481255196
9980876238

ANGELS HIGH School M.C.Layout, Vijayanagar, Bangalore. Required Experienced Nursery Teachers, Science & Maths for High School and Coordinator. 8431812577/ 9986555788.

NIRMAN INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOL- CBSE,7th Block, Vishweshwaraiah Layout, Bangalore-91 Requires qualified TEACHERS with strong spoken English skills for all subjects from Nursery to Grade X. Walk-in on all working days. Contact: 8123030731/ 9986055970 Mail: nirmaninfo24@gmail.com

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WANTED MARKETING EXEUTIVES & TELECALLERS for Real Estate Company in Budigere Cross Call- 7349613954 chekkeraporperties.com

REQUIRED EXPERIENCED Primary and High School Teachers with B.A / B.Sc, B.Ed / M.A / M.Sc, M.Ed to teach Science, Social Science, Mathemetics, English, Hindi & PE Teacher. Required Librarian, Lab Assistant & Drivers. Walk-in-interview. Contact: Lalith Castle International School, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Blore-98. Mob: 9620464800 Email: lcis.rrnagar@gmail.com

CAMLIN ENGLISH School State Board 6th 'C' Main, 4th Cross, Hampinagar Bengaluru-560104 080-23301363 REQUIRES TEACHERS for High, Middle and Primary School. English, Kannada, Maths, Science, Social Computer, Physical Education. WALK-IN INTERVIEW or Resume to Email: camlinschool84@gmail.com

WANTED TRAINED Graduates and post Graduates for primary and high school, with Min 5years of Experience with Fluent English. English(MA.B ed) Kannada(MA.B ed)Social Science(MA,BA,B ed) Maths&Science(M.sc,B ed) Hindi(B.A, B ed) Physical Education(C.P ed/ B.P ed) Computer (BCA) Contact: 9632315392 Walk-in for an interview on 6/4/26 &8/4/26 Between 10-30 to1-30 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial High School 4th main road,9th cross chamrajpet,Near Nayara petrol Bunk Bangalore-18

EDUCATION

To Place your Classified Ads Contact: 9845114560

V.E.T.GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS
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Ph : 080-2658 6808 / 2658 4760

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SCHOOL - V.V.Puram / J.P.Nagar

Science Teachers	B.Sc,M.Sc, B.Ed., 3 Yrs. Exp.
English Teachers	B.A.,M.A, B.Ed., 3 Years Exp.
Social Teachers	B.A., M.A, B.Ed., 3 Yrs. Exp.
Maths Teachers	B.Sc,M.Sc, B.Ed., 3 Yrs. Exp.
Physical Education	B.P.Ed, (Preferably Female)
Computer Teachers	BCA / B.Sc-Comp. / M.Sc-Comp.
Sanskrit	B.A.,M.A.,B.Ed.,
Hindi	B.A.,M.A.,B.Ed.,
Teacher (Primary)	Any Degree with D.Ed / B.Ed
Mother Teacher	B.A.,B.Sc.,B.Ed., 3 Yrs Exp.

ADMIN

Clerk / Admin	Any Degree with Computer Knowledge & Good Communication Skills

WALK - IN - INTERVIEW
on 01st and 02nd April 2026
between 9.30 am and 2.30 pm at J.P.Nagar Campus

E-mail : vetinst@rediffmail.com / parvathi3838@gmail.com

Wanted

WANTED: OFFICE Executive (Male/ Female) for a Hydraulic Trading Company to take care of day to day office work (Qtn, Invoice, Eway bill making, keeping Inventory Records etc). Computer skills must. E-Mail resume to: vandec.office@gmail.com. WALK IN INTERVIEW VANDEC, 47, RAR MANSION, 1ST MAIN ROAD, ROYAN CIRCLE, CHAMRAJPET, BLR-18, PHONE: 41223132/ 9886477315

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WANTED COOK for Factory Director & staff. Electronics city area. (Bangalore). both Non veg/veg. Breakfast /lunch/ dinner for 6 to 8 people daily. Can provide Free single person accommodation/ food. Clean & No bad habits. Call 9886972374 or 9980283865

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MERCEDES BENZ GLS450D 2025 MODEL SOLITURE BLUE 11,500 KMS, BRAND NEW CAR FOR SALE EX-SHOWROOM PRICE: 1.25 CRORES, DIRECT BUYERS ONLY. CONTACT: 9036051000/ 9035011001.

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MATRIMONIAL

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SEEKING ALIANCE from upper caste for Bangalore based beautiful girl 1995/5'6',MArch daughter of Army officer.Mother, sister doctors.Contact 9885186147

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GROOM WANTED
Sunni Muslim Educated 26 years 5'1", Masters from UK. Looking for a Well Educated Suitable Boy. For further details
Contact : 9845066818

Wanted Groom

Sunni Muslim girl, 2003 born, B.Com, from a highly respected affluent family, seeking a cultured and well-matched partner. (080-69072057)

Brides Wanted

Muslim

Wanted Bride
Sunni Muslim doctor (1997), MBBS/MD – General Medicine, from an affluent Bangalore family, seeking a suitable match.
080-69072057

Telugu

Wanted Bride
Balija Telugu (Naidu) | 1995 Born | 5'11"Well-educated, handsome boy from a reputed high-class business family, Bangalore .
(9972605001)

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PERSONAL

Change of Name

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **MOHAMED JUNAID,** residing at No.46, 4th Cross, Vinayakanagar, J P Nagar, 5th Phase, Bengaluru-560078, have changed my name to **MOHAMMED JUNAID** vide affidavit dated 02-03-2026 before notary Mohammed Hussain K, Bengaluru.
Henceforth I shall be called **MOHAMMED JUNAID** only

I MAVILLA SAI SREYA, A-Block 308, Splendid Royale Apartment, ITI Layout, 3rd Main, Bengaluru-68, have changed my name to MAVILLA SAI SHHREYYA Vide affidavit dated-28/03/2026.

Community Centre (R) - 1956

COMMUNITY INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES CIMS

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LOCATED IN PRIME LOCATION NEAR ASHOKA PILLAR, II BLOCK JAYANAGAR, BENGALURU

ADMISSIONS OPEN FOR 2026 - 27

KARNATAKA GOVERNMENT QUOTA SEATS FOR MBA & MCA 2026

PGCET Entrance exam date has been announced in KEA website. Exam will be conducted on **24th May 2026** all over Karnataka. Students who want to complete MBA & MCA in a very less fees, kindly register before 8th April 2026 in the kea.kar.nic.in website. Even final Semester Degree Students can register.

CIMS Government Quota Seats — MBA- 90 Seats, MCA- 60 Seats

Note: Students who want to pursue higher education but stepping back due to financial problem, Kindly utilize this government benefits

ವಿಶೇಷ ಸೂಚನೆ: ಉನ್ನತ ವ್ಯಾಸಂಗ ಮಾಡಲು ಬಯಸುವ, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಯಿಂದ ಅಧ್ಯಯನದಿಂದ ಹಿಂದೆ ಸರಿಯುತ್ತಿರುವ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳು, ದಯವಿಟ್ಟು ಈ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಿ.

CIMS is conducting FREE! PGCET coaching classes for all MBA & MCA aspirants at CIMS Campus in April month. Interested students join the whatsapp group for receiving all details of PGCET - 2026

MERIT SCHOLARSHIP
Students joining our institution from PGCET within 5000 Rank will be given a Scholarship of Rs.40,000/- in 1st Year

PGCET CODE: MBA - B153 / MCA – C528

Placement Summary for 2023 - 2025

Total No. of Companies	68
Total No. of Students in the college (MBA & MCA)	300
Total No. of Students not opted/ not eligible for Placements	53
Total No. of Students opted for Placements	247
Total No. of students placed*	216
Percentage	88%
Highest Package	12 LPA
Average Package	6 LPA

CIMS RANK HOLDERS OF BATCH 2023-2025

100% Result

MCA RANK HOLDERS

Ms. JOSHI ARYA SUHAS — 2nd Rank 92.81%

Ms. MEGHANA H — 4th Rank 91.74%

Ms. NANDINI R — 5th Rank 91.44%

MBA RANK HOLDERS

Ms. SOWMYA SHREE K — 2nd Rank 83.37%

Ms. CHANDANA N — 4th Rank 81.93%

For Admission enquiry contact: 9731022994 / 080 26577851
Website: www.cimsbschool.org / Email ID: admissions@cimsbschool.org